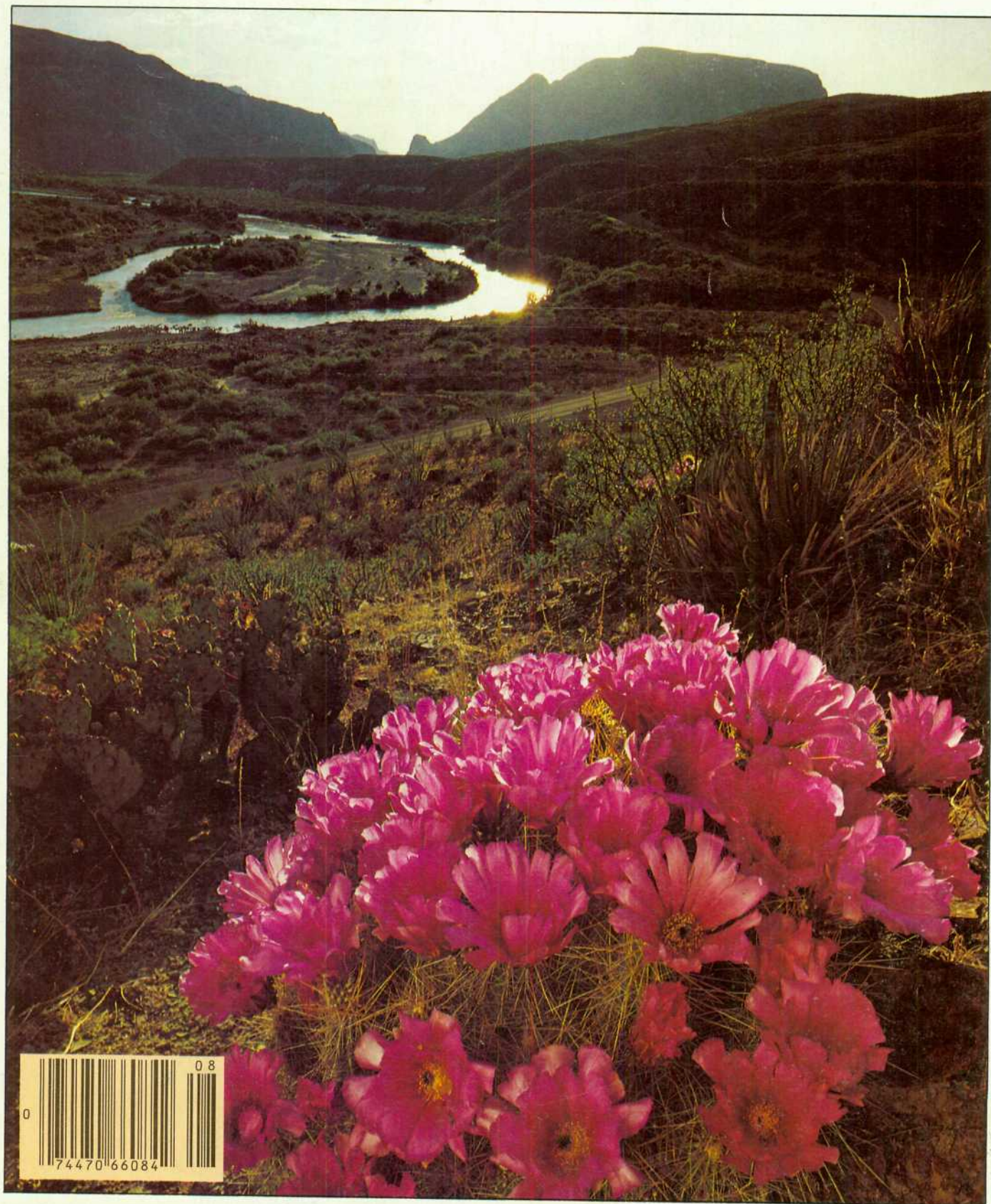
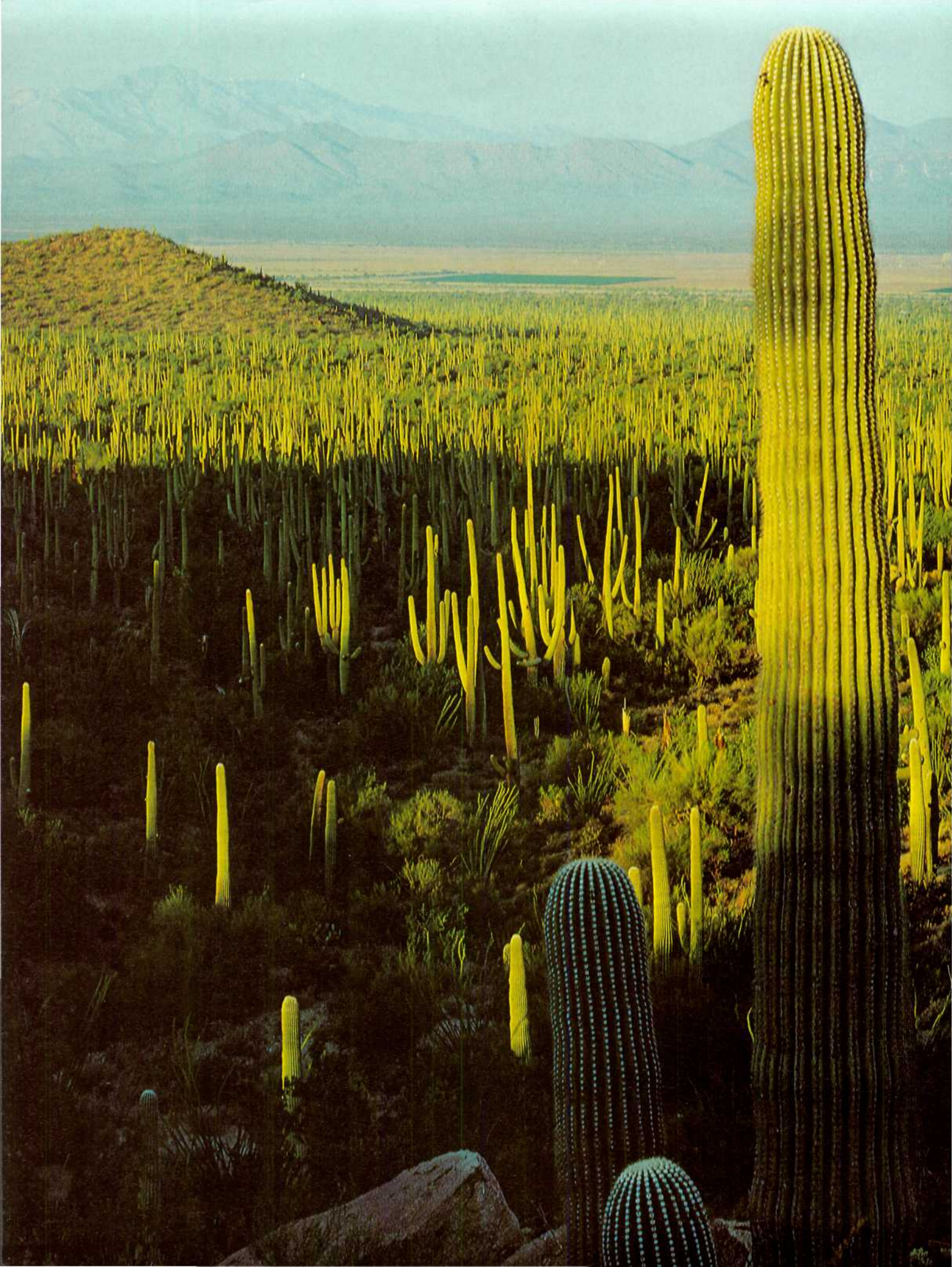


# Desert

August, 1981  
\$1.50









# Desert

MAGAZINE OF THE SOUTHWEST

## Traveling with Topo Maps

by S. Lee Rourke

Topo maps are a source of information into those little-known and exciting places, waiting to be explored.

page 12

## The Saline Settlements

by April M. Kopp

First discovered by Spaniards in search of fabled cities of gold, these pueblo communities sank to ruins and faded legends.

page 14

## Portrait of an Artist

by Rick Lanning

If there is a spirit in the desert, it lives in Ted DeGrazia. He's got intelligence, talent and a whole lot ofchutzpah.

page 20

## Easy on the River

by Stephen Simpson

One man's reflections on a float down the Colorado River. Take a peaceful respite from your day-to-day routine. Relax and enjoy the beauty.

page 24

## Big Bend National Park

by Jim Taulman and Carol Vaughan

A place of awe-inspiring, rugged beauty. Taulman and Vaughan not only inspire us pictorially, but tell us how to enjoy to the fullest the wonders of this national park.

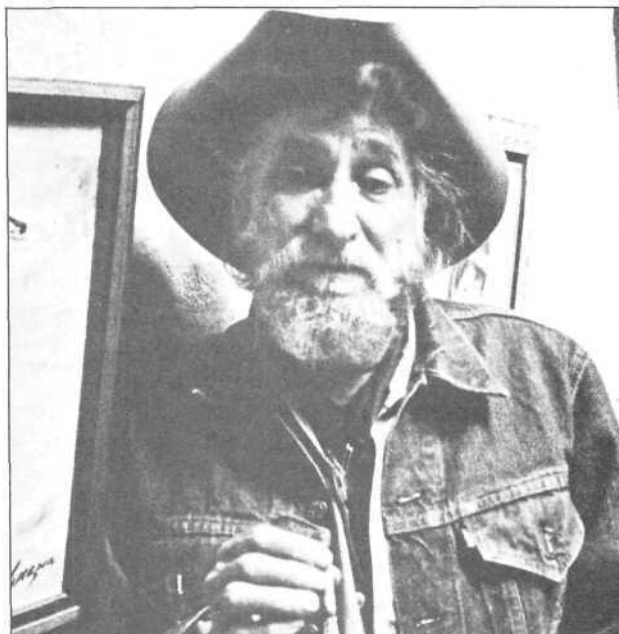
page 30

## The California Grizzly Bear

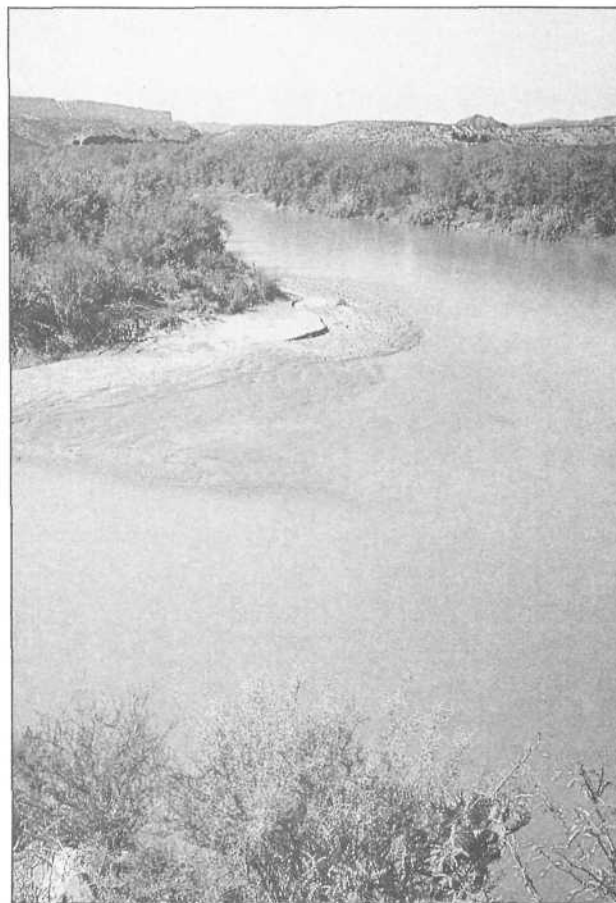
by Karen Sausman

A part of our heritage, the grizzly bear now roams in the printed words of Sausman.

page 36



Page 20



Page 30

## The Seri Indians

by William Adams

Perhaps the oldest living tribe in North America, the Seris are experts at adapting. Through flexibility and tenacity, the Seris have survived centuries. With these same self-made characteristics, they are now moving into the 20th Century.

page 39

## A Man and A Mine

by Tom McGrath

Together and apart, each left a mark on early California history. The excitement of discovery and the wild ways of politics are tied together in the story of Henry T. Gage and the Governor Mine.

page 44

## The Lost Grave of a Neglected Hero

by Choral Pepper

Revealed at last: detailed clues to the location of the grave of Melchior Diaz, who may have been the first white man in the Southwest.

page 52

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- 6 Letters
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- 48 Traces in the Sand
- 56 Calendar
- 58 Desert Rockhound
- 61 Trading Post
- 62 Our Desert Heritage

Cover: The Rio Grande rambles along through Big Bend National Park. In the foreground is a hedgehog cactus. Photo by David Muench.

Inside Cover: Cacti at Saguaro National Monument near Tucson, Arizona by Willard Clay.



# EDITORIAL

## Toward a bigger heart, a broader mind and a healthier body.

ED SEYKOTA



**I** AM THE NEW editor of *Desert* magazine. Many of you have been reading *Desert* since before I was born. Let me introduce my desert heart.

I don't live in the desert, but I love it. Like the sea, that love has a lot to do with space and freedom. A family summer trip through the Southwest long ago taught me a lot about this dry land. I had never really seen summer thunderstorms, thought that chollas really were fuzzy and didn't quite know what a flash flood was. I found reality greater than my imagination at the Grand Canyon and cussed a steaming, overheated, '66 Chevy Impala by the side of the road in the middle of nowhere. I saw Four Corners before the power plants. I've seen the fantasies of Bryce, Zion and Monument Valley. We bought trinkets and postcards and slept under skies so full of stars that we hated to close our eyes.

I've been back many times since and have met the Southwest on more intimate terms than that first introduction. I hiked the finger canyons of the Kolob in winter, watched a comet light up the North Rim, met the quiet beauty of Schnebly Hill Road in red rock country. I have seen the thick adobe churches of New Mexico and photographed the meeting of a cobalt blue sky with bright sandstone and rippling dunes. I had blue corn tortillas in Santa Fe, waffles in Prescott and fried eggs in Gallup.

I don't live there, but I have been there and have loved it, and will be back again many times. I still have not done any of the great river runs, still haven't hiked into the Maze and still can't get enough of Stegner, Abbey, Lopez and Krutch.

I know the desert. I know the Southwest. I know it better than some and less than some, but I know it . . . and now I find myself in the privileged position of editing *Desert* magazine.

My challenge is threefold: to nurture and preserve the affection and community that *Desert* magazine has established with its readers, to become a better instrument of service and communication as opposed to division, and, to put more meat in the magazine, to make it more healthy, more alive.

I read a lot of magazines and I especially read the letters to the editor. You are a very vocal, very communicative, batch of readers. Please don't let those pens cool off. Your affection for the person of the magazine is something to be proud of, a real compliment.

Our offices are two blocks from the ocean. Sometimes we are asked how we can publish *Desert* magazine on the seacoast. It's easy. The dry and dusty manuscripts come in the mail daily. We just publish it—but you write it. Nobody writes for us about what they have not experienced. FPE, first person experiential, is the imperative here. Anybody can put out information, facts and figures. It's a little more difficult and a lot more rewarding to transmit experience. That's what we are here for.

The Southwest, yours, mine and ours, is such an expansive empty land, and yet the desert is so full. My experience of this land will always be limited, but it will always expand. I think that is why many of you read *Desert*. It expands your experience, takes you where you may never go. Through these pages, we all go farther than our own cars or legs will every carry us. I think that is the intention of the man who started *Desert*, Randall Henderson. An excerpt from his first editorial (October, 1936) is on page 51. It has been reprinted in these pages before, but I believe it is worth reading again. Henderson was a sensitive man and a real communicator. His vision still serves us well. What we were, we will become. Self-examination is a great teacher.

I am sure that by now you have all noticed the recent changes in ownership and editorship. We have no intention of making vast changes in the magazine, only to improve it. Henderson had a good idea and benevolent motives. I see no reason to change.

*Stephen Simpson*

# Desert

MAGAZINE OF THE SOUTHWEST

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### Art Director/Photo Editor

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### Graphic Artists

GITTA PFAHL

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### Archives Librarian

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# PUBLISHER'S NOTEBOOK

by Ed Seykota

These are a few of my favorite collected thoughts  
about service. I hope you like them.

---

The most delicate, the most sensible of all pleasures, consists in promoting the pleasure of others.

*Jean de La Bruyere*

Goodwill for a business is built by good goods, service and truthful advertising.

*E. R. Waite*

May we never be tempted to forget that there can be no real success apart from service, that success is but service visualized.

*B. C. Forbes*

To give real service, you must add something which cannot be bought or measured with money, and that is sincerity and integrity.

*Donald A. Adams*

No business can offer proper service unless it makes a profit, and service is what a business has to sell.

*William Feather*

The way not to lead a monotonous life is to live for others:

*Fulton J. Sheen*

I don't know what your destiny will be, but one thing I know: the only ones among you who will be really happy are those who will have sought and found how to serve.

*Dr. Albert Schweitzer*

Service: the occupation of a servant.

*Webster*

One of the best gifts you can give is to allow someone to contribute to your life.

*Dr. Jason Doty*

The greatest comfort of my old age, and that which gives me the highest satisfaction, is the pleasing remembrance of the many benefits and friendly offices I have done to others.

*Cato*

Give me good health and the strength to be of real service to the world, and I'll get all that's good for me, and will what's left to those who want it.

*William Feather*

When people are serving, life is no longer meaningless.

*John Gardner*

Service to a just cause rewards the worker with more real happiness and satisfaction than any other venture of life.

*Carrie Chapman Catt*

Learn to derive so much happiness from the service you render the world, that your happiness will communicate itself to all you rub shoulders with in your journey through life.

*B. C. Forbes*

American business needs a lifting purpose greater than the struggle of materialism.

*Herbert Hoover*



# LETTERS

## We Like It, We Don't

Thank you for your rational approach to a complex problem [see Editorial, June '81] and in your continuing efforts in maintaining *Desert* magazine's format and contents within the view of Randall Henderson's intent.

Bob Pierucci  
Stockton, California

I have not renewed because I am disgusted with the new format of *Desert*. I do not like the "liberal" Sierra Club-type of attitude now expressed.

James Popa  
Grass Valley, California

I must say that we were delighted to hear about the change of ownership of *Desert* magazine. You thanked us for our continuing loyalty to the publication, but frankly, we were on the verge of cancelling or at least not renewing our subscription. It was becoming increasingly obvious that this erstwhile wonderful and, at least, *balanced* magazine was being more and more slanted toward the off-road vehicles and the other forces of destruction of the very desert it purported to represent. Meanwhile, best wishes to you, and we sincerely hope to see a dramatic change in policy—at least a little more fairness toward all those who love the desert instead of just those who may someday love it to death.

Leo & Gloria Nowak  
Ridgecrest, California

Thank you very much for the two copies of *Desert* that you sent containing my little poem. I was surprised and delighted to see it on the page with David Muench's magnificent photograph of Death Valley. I have always admired his work. Also, as an amateur photographer myself, I want to commend you for including the information about the camera and settings and lenses used by Muench. So many times, I have seen a beautiful photograph in a magazine and wished information on how the picture was taken had been included. I'm sure other photographers will bless you also. I am mailing my check today for a subscription to *Desert* to your San Diego office. I don't want to miss any future issues.

Helen Castle  
Concord, California

Please send me your magazine for a year. I love it. Nice variety of stories. Enough to

make me go back to the California desert, looking at those Owens Valley pictures.

Art Foran  
Clancy, Montana

## More Information on Conservation

In reference to June, 1981 *Desert*, the article *Water Harvesting in Israel*. Some of your readers might be interested in a comparative background by reading *Rivers in the Desert* by Nelson Glueck, published by Grove Press, 1960. This is the Biblical research on the Negev and the water resources therein during the Exodus and later events.

Glenn L. Lembke, PhD.  
San Antonio, Texas

## Everett Ruess

Please read the enclosed letter and then forward it to Waldo Ruess in Santa Barbara. I hope you will give serious consideration to re-publishing *On Desert Trails with Everett Ruess*, originally published by Desert Magazine Press in 1950. It has been out of print for many years now, and there is a whole new generation of readers who would be interested in the book, if only it were made available to them. It has a ready-made audience in those of us who have read Abbey and Stegner and Krutch, and it deserves to take its rightful place among the recognized classics of southwestern literature.

Tom Wright  
Scottsdale, Arizona

## Readers Do Answer

I don't know what letters you got, but here are answers to some I got. I simply told of a "certain back-country meeting," [Letters, Feb. '81] but some folks saw it differently, as you can see from the following.

I thought *Desert* magazine was a local issue and never dreamed it got as far as Algood, Tennessee; Chesterfield, Missouri and Perth, Australia. So I reckon this will be my last letter to *Desert*, 'cause them "Shatneys" are getting stirred up, and I want to avoid another feud with them "bad" ones.

To Kate Shatney, Algood, Tenn: I am not your absconded husband Jake. The "J" in my name is for a signer of the

Declaration of Independence, but that name has been silent since the late 1850s and is now in memory of a Shatney who pleaded he didn't know a horse was on the other end of the rope he picked up. That hanging rope is still on display in the gold rush country of California. Now, Kate, any preacher with the infernal gall to prop Jake up in front of a pulpit as a prime example of pristine purity and born-again sobriety when, in your own words, Jake was dead drunk for the two-week revival, ought to be ashamed of himself. Don't keep it secret any longer—that preacher is responsible for half the states of Kentucky and Tennessee being dry to this day. Legalize booze—the home folks will get a different buzz in the head from the legal stuff.

To Morna, that sweet young thing there in Tempe, Arizona with the "beautiful legs and disposition to match," I'll certainly look you up.

To that artist (no name) in Windowrock, Arizona who draw'd "a part of me" doing my deportment a'top a huge boulder, he should draw pictures on rocks in California, which state protects rocks, lizards, birds, goats, the terra-firma and fauna. Folks wouldn't get within a thousand feet of your protected drawings, much less understand them. But anyone who would draw pictures on rocks would also commit "piscatorial acts in forbidden places." For that clown's information, I still use the same type "two-holer" Shatneys have used for years. When I extrude, I do as the Shatneys before me: I look and conjecture at the world before me through a knot-hole. You'd be surprised what you can see through a knot-hole in an outhouse door!

To Joslin E. Shatney, Chesterfield, Missouri: I am not your long-lost husband Joe. I was going to spend 18¢ on you, but near the tail-end of your P.S. I couldn't believe the cuss words that tumbled out as you wrote—all of them aimed at me. You must have married a "bad" Shatney to use such language. However, such cuss words are really an ordinary greeting as well as a farewell amongst Shatneys of sorts.

To Clementine Shatney, Perth, Australia: If you have read this far, dear Clementine, you now know two Shatneys already think I might be their absconded or long-lost husband. And I am not that



high-rolling bounder who left you with the five children. Your letter was the sweetest and most charming of all, in spite of what a Shatney done to you. So, eff'n I ever get the means, I'm comin' to see you honey!

*J. Joseph Shatney, Jr.  
Still visiting San Diego County*

## Fans of Mary Austin

Congratulations! These last two issues of *Desert* magazine are classics. I am an old woman, but the tribute to Mary Austin was a thing of beauty, and it brought memories of my first reading of her *Land of Little Rain*. The entire magazine is a thing of rare quality.

*Ruth E. Gibson  
Idaho Falls, Idaho*

The article about Mary Austin's *Land of Little Rain* by Jon Wesley Sering left out one important item about Mary Austin. In 1930, the Grabhorn Press of San Francisco published *Taos Pueblo*, photographed by Ansel Easton Adams and described by Mary Austin, in an edition of 108 copies. This started Adams on his road to fame.

*R. R. Delareuelle  
Walnut Creek, California*

## Salton Sea Revisited

I'm writing you about your one issue in which you talked about Salton Sea [Jan. '81]. I would like to know when and where you took that picture. You have been there, I take it. How recently? I went there September 30-October 2, 1980. I want you to know it *smells*. It's dirty-looking water and you walk on dead fish constantly. They (the fish) also roll in with every wave! How could you print something like that? Oh sure, when it first came about it was probably pretty. But now? I feel sorry for the people who probably read your article and then went there. Such a disappointment.

That issue was the first I bought. I do enjoy your other articles, and whenever I see a new issue, I buy it.

*Joyce Trout  
Dateland, Arizona*

**Our apologies for any connection between the article and your misery. We still feel that this is an interesting place to visit.**

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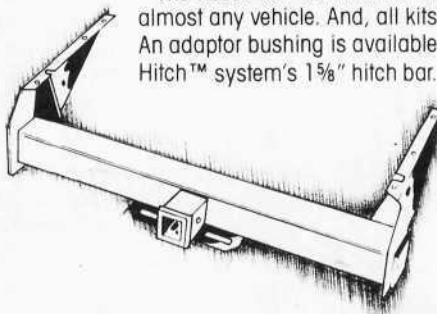
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# THE LIVING DESERT

by Susan Durr Nix

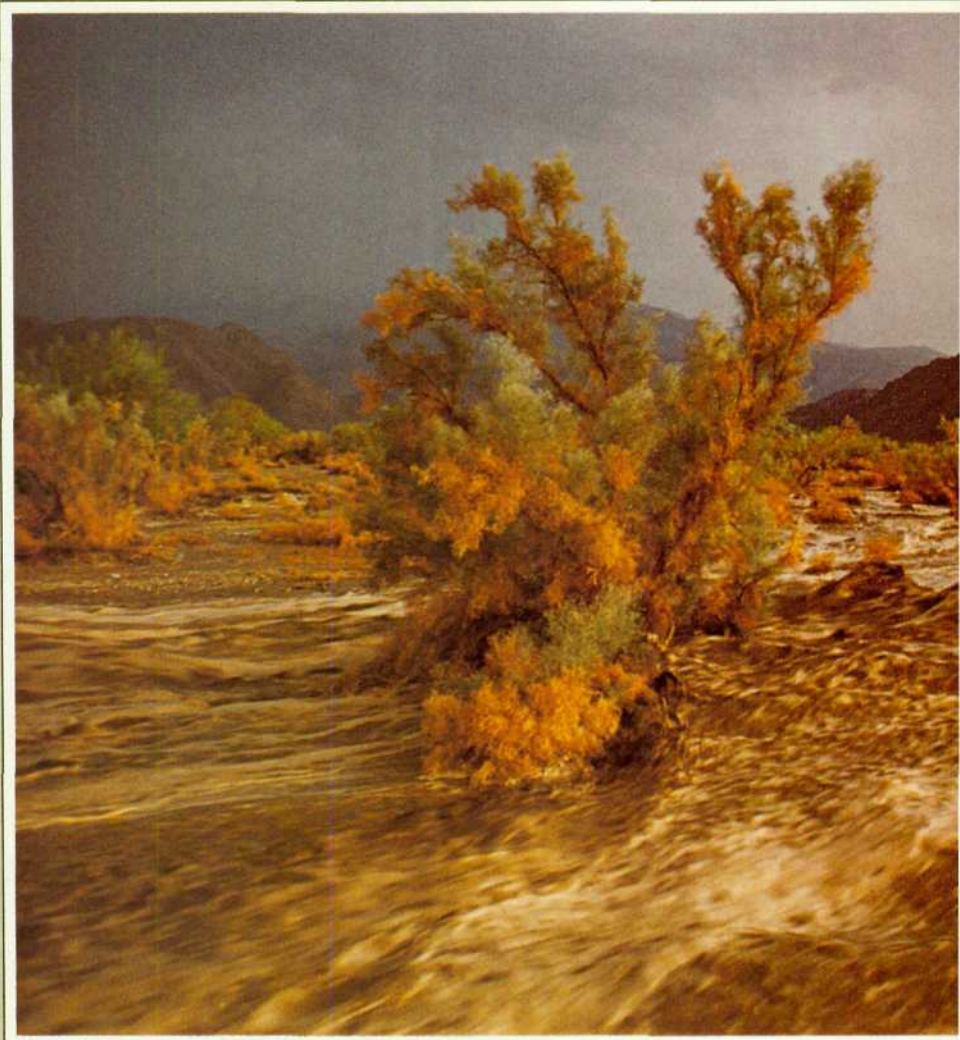
## Desert Deluge

**W**HEN THE cat woke Billie at one a.m. on July 19, 1979, the water in her bedroom was already six inches deep. Five minutes later, her jeans soaked knee-high, she was pounding hysterically on the hood of a passing car. Within an hour, shoulder-high water washed the street, imprisoning a mother and four children in their ranch-style home across the way and sweeping a neighboring couple along on a sodden mattress raft.

The next morning, Billie found the cat on the roof and five feet of mud and debris where her bed had been. The back of the house had vanished, as had most of her furniture and all of her peace of mind, but she had survived a desert flash flood, a regional disaster comparable to tornadoes, tidal waves and avalanches.

Billie's home was in one of several affluent Palm Springs "cove communities," so called because they are built in sheltered, relatively wind-free nooks in the Santa Rosa Mountains. Championship golf courses and shimmering swimming pools obliterate the debris that once was deposited at the base of the mountains by countless other floods spilling in from steep-sided canyons. Arroyos or washes, the tell-tale scars of former torrents, now support picturesque groves of smoke tree and paloverde or are seeded with grass and incorporated into golf courses. It's no wonder that the thousands of people attracted to this and similar scenic communities in the Southwest worry more about runaway inflation than runaway water. Who needs flood insurance in the sunbelt?

Desert land, largely devoid of water, is nevertheless fundamentally shaped by it. Water is the number one erosional force in arid lands; it sculpts the mountains and badlands, cuts the canyons and arroyos, deposits the salt flats and alluvial fans and rearranges tons of sand, gravel and rock, completely altering the face of the landscape. Although it is thought of as a

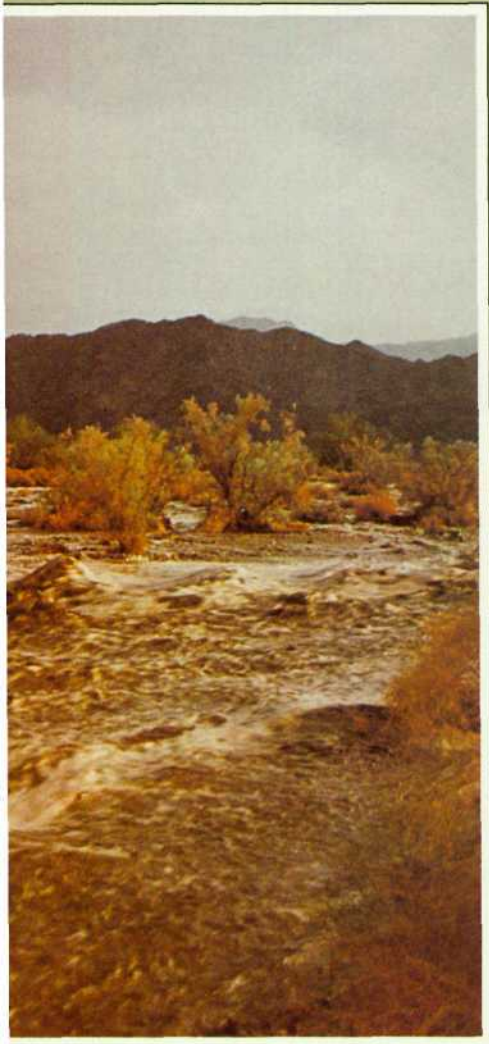


"thirsty" land, much of the desert is in fact less sponge than pavement. Without aerating earthworms or a porous humus layer to aid absorption, rain drops gouge out little craters in the dust and run off in rivulets that snake in and around rocks and plants to meet and join others in the race down-slope. Denser vegetation would anchor the soil and retard the flow. In its absence, the water dislodges debris and carries it along. Soon muddy streams converge in the wash, creating a river where moments before none existed. If the wash crosses city streets, even a moderately light rain can undermine the roadway and break

*A torrent explodes across the desert.*

**Water: it sculpts  
and cuts,  
rearranging tons of  
sand, gravel and  
rock, completely  
altering the face of  
the landscape.**





churning outflow spills into the wash, sweeping up thousands of tons of soil and plant material as it goes. A foamy tongue advances as fast as a man can run, followed by a thundering, grinding torrent capable of traveling dozens of miles.

Where the terrain is fairly flat, the path of destruction may be 50 feet wide. Significant local relief, such as a mountain, is attacked by this liquid sandpaper and literally eaten away. Resistant rock material is quickly battered and scoured into labyrinthine channels and fantastic forms typical of badlands areas.

It is not unusual for desert cloudbursts to drop an inch of rainfall in 10 minutes. This is more than it seems: One inch falling evenly over one acre equals 27,154 gallons of water weighing 113.3 tons. Deserts have an average annual rainfall of less than 10 inches, but the averages include many years without a drop of rain and the years include many totally dry months. A half an hour of violent deluge may account for one third to one half of the yearly average; sometimes more. In the Sahara, for example, there are areas with a statistical mean of four inches that have not seen rain for more than 20 years. The consequences of such unpredictable and concentrated downpours are often tragic.


Rain originating in mountains miles beyond hearing is suddenly there, swamping everything in its path: bridges, buildings, people, animals — all gone. Catch basins overflow, retaining walls collapse, dikes crumble. In 1976 a flash flood 15 to 20 feet deep ripped through the wash at the Living Desert Reserve for four hours, growing steadily higher while towering paloverde trees tumbled head over heels, and chunks of the bighorn sheep mountain disappeared from sight. Living Desert staff members, Billie among them, watched mesmerized as huge pulses of faster runoff—about a minute apart—mounted the turbulent water beneath and glided over it like waves over a shore. The flood was already crashing against the buildings when the levee above Palm Desert burst apart, saving the Reserve by diverting higher waters to a new course of

destruction. Fifty homes were lost that day. Fascinated then, terrified now, Billie is the first to agree that flood insurance isn't such a bad idea in the sunbelt.

Most of these desert rainstorms are localized in the mountains and last but a few hours. The waters slow, the skies clear, the plip-plop of dripping and the strong smell of creosote fills the air. The remaining water disappears into the sand or filters into natural basins, forming short-lived, shallow lakes called playas. Because the flood waters are saturated with minerals, evaporation leaves a residue which may grow many feet thick. The salt lakes, salt pans, alkalai flats, borax lakes and bitter lakes of our deserts are legacies of flash floods. Huge jigsaw puzzles of cracked mud form beneath the drying sun. Assorted debris from miles away litters the ground.

One of the first signs of a return to normalcy are the fresh excavations of desert ants in the damp sand. Where pools of water remain, the discordant chorus of spadefoot toads erupts or fairy shrimp hatch from sand-grain-sized eggs. These animals are outstanding examples of flood-dependent species whose high-speed life cycles must run their course in the brief period before the pool evaporates. Coyotes, snakes, insects and other animals visit these pools for food and water.

In the washes, small animals take refuge in the islands of debris. Seeds long dormant begin to sprout. Some are wildflowers, whose growth-retardant outer coatings have been dissolved by rainwater acids. Others are exclusively wash dwellers that require the abrading action of flood waters to germinate. Smoke trees, ironwoods and paloverdes are such flood-processed plants. It's surprising, in fact, how many plants and animals turn cataclysm into advantage. Their peculiar and complicated adaptations are stories in themselves.

From our vantage point, a flash flood is an unholy disaster, reshaping our environment and sometimes our lives. It is also a deliverance and a promise of renewal upon which the desert depends for its very existence. 

it apart like cheap plastic. Motorists who underestimate the damage or disregard the detour signs commonly regret their folly.

Flash floods occur when a heavy cloudburst deposits so much rain in so short a time that water cascades down mountainsides in sheets and gushes through canyons in great waves. Think of a canyon as a storm drain, funneling water from the mountains out onto the plains below. Each narrow, high-walled gorge receives runoff faster than it can drain out, so the water level climbs and fairly explodes out of the mouth, taking huge boulders and weathered rock fragments with it. The



# CHUCK WAGON COOKIN'

by Stella Hughes

## Avocados:

### Fruit of the Southwest

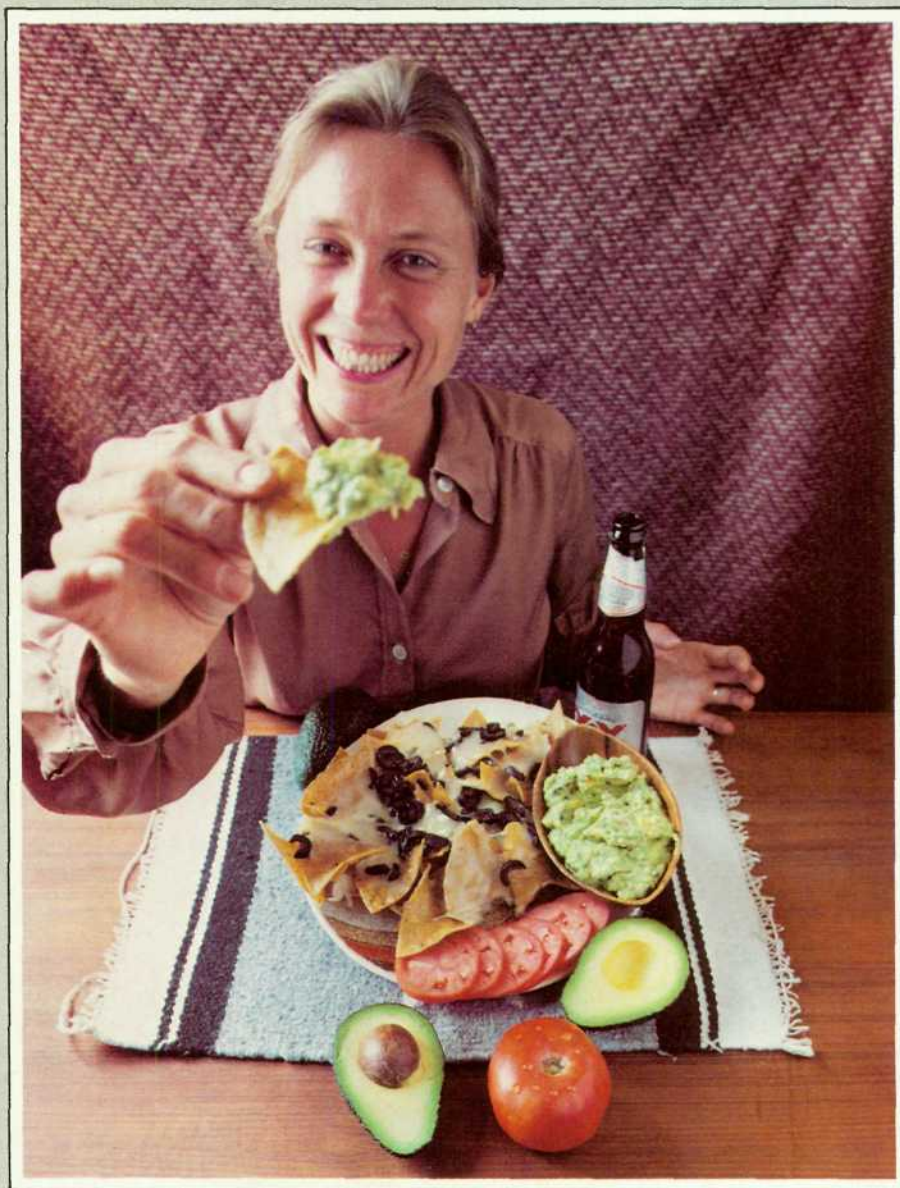
**I**F YOU'VE ever written a recipe book, a food column or are in the food business — raising it, selling it or just cooking it — you are asked some darned funny or perplexing questions. You better have a huge index filed away in your cranium, so you can answer on the spur of the moment. Just bluffing your way through is poor business, and (as almost anyone will admit) it's hard to simply say "I don't know." I don't care who you are, you can't know it all. Even Julia Childs, Betty Crocker or Fanny Farmer must, at some time or another, have had to admit they just didn't know.

A few years ago, I was a guest on a talk radio show. Out of the clear blue, the master of ceremonies asked me, "What's a gill?" Now, consider a moment; we weren't discussing fish or fowl; the emcee was merely flipping through my recently published book, *Chuck Wagon Cookin'*. I lucked out when I saw his finger held a page well in the back of the book, and I blurted out, "A half cup."

I knew the answer only because I'd done a great deal of research on oldtime measurements from cookbooks at least 100 years old. He didn't ask me (darn it), but I could have told him butter or lard the size of a walnut makes one ounce, or that four cups of flour equals one quart or one pound. Modern cookbooks never call for a gill of anything anymore, nor do they call for a handful or smidgeon, or say dump or throw when they mean add.

I often make guacamole, or avocado dip, and the recipe I use cautions the cook to place the avocado pit in the mixture if made ahead of time, to ensure it won't become dark. There are some things I don't worry about (guacamole turning dark being one of them), so I failed to have the answer when asked if this method worked. I had to run a test batch to find out.

This is what I found; placing the pit in the mixture does not prevent discoloration



STEPHEN SIMPSON

*Judi Persky, our Archives Librarian, taking Stella's suggestions to heart (or stomach).*

completely. It just might slow the process down a bit, but if made as much as three hours before serving, you'll have avocado dip that has begun to darken. Who cares? If you make it from the recipe I use, the dip is so blamed good, your only worry is if there'll be enough.

Is the avocado a fruit or a vegetable? My grandchildren asked this when I told them the early names for avocados in the United States were alligator pear, custard apple and even laurel peach. The Department of Agriculture settled the matter in the late

1800s when they officially labeled the avocado a fruit.

It is not generally known that the avocado is native to America. Cortez ate this delicious fruit in what is now Mexico, and it was cultivated in Central America. In Chile, Peru and Ecuador, the fruit is still known as *palta*, its Indian name. Sometime in the early 1800s the first avocado trees were planted in Florida, but even though Florida was the first, they don't have the most: California now raises more than three quarters of all the



avocados harvested in this country.

There is no time when avocados aren't in season. However, they are picked when quite underripe, because they ripen best off the tree. From early fall until Memorial Day, the California fuerte, thin-skinned and bright green, is marketed. The hass, with a dark, thick, rough skin, is also from California and is available all summer. Southwesterners are in the habit of eating avocados year-round.

Tips on preserving and serving may not be out of order for the novice. One important thing to remember; you'll seldom find an overripe avocado in a well-tended fruit market. So, if you buy an avocado and expect to serve it for dinner, you're probably out of luck. Firm avocados will ripen when stored at room temperature in 3 to 5 days. If you wish to slow the ripening process, store in the refrigerator.

The classic way to serve avocado is on the half-shell — which means simply halved, unpeeled, pit removed, with lemon juice and salt. You can serve it with the salad dressing of your choice or pile lobster or shrimp mixtures onto the halves. It's great sliced thin and layered on ham or chicken sandwiches. Any kind of tossed salad is enhanced by the addition of cubes of avocado.

### Guacamole

There are many recipes for guacamole, or avocado dip, but if you make this one once, you'll never make any other kind. (Well, maybe almost never).

2 or 3 ripe avocados  
1 small onion, grated  
1 4-oz. can diced green chiles  
About 1/3 stick butter  
2 tablespoons mayonnaise  
1 hard-cooked egg (to be used while still warm)  
salt to taste  
Pinch of garlic powder (optional)  
Mash the ripe avocado with a fork until a smooth paste. Stir in grated onion and diced green chiles. In a separate bowl,

grate the warm, hard-boiled egg over the butter, and work in the mayonnaise with a fork. Blend well before gradually adding the contents of the other bowl. Season with salt and garlic powder. Cover and refrigerate. (Dip will darken when made several hours ahead of time).

### Chicken in Avocados

2 tablespoons butter  
2 tablespoons flour  
1/2 cup milk  
1 cup cream  
2 cups diced cooked chicken  
1 teaspoon salt  
1/2 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce  
Pinch cayenne  
1/4 cup diced green chiles, canned  
3 avocados  
Paprika

In a double boiler, melt butter over hot water; add flour and blend. Pour in milk and cream and cook, stirring constantly, until smooth and thickened. Add chicken, salt, Worcestershire sauce, cayenne and green chiles. Blend. Do not cook further. Cut avocados in half and discard seeds. Fill with chicken mixture, spreading it over the cut surface of the avocado. Arrange in shallow baking dish and brown under broiler 3 or 4 inches from the flame. Sprinkle with paprika before serving.

### Avocado Sauce

2 ripe avocados  
2 tablespoons lime juice  
1 tablespoon grated or finely chopped onion  
1 small clove garlic, mashed  
1 small can diced green chiles, drained  
1 medium size ripe tomato, chopped  
Peel avocados, remove seeds and mash to a paste with the lime juice. Stir in remaining ingredients and refrigerate, covered. Makes about 2 cups sauce. Serve with Mexican dishes or vegetables. Can be used as a relish with meats of all kinds.

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# Traveling with Topo Maps

*We all have fantasies of finding that out-of-the-way spot where we can discover some man-made artifact other than a sun-bleached beer can.*

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**Text and photography  
by S. Lee Rourke**

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**T**OPOGRAPHICAL maps, commonly referred to as topos, are published by the United States Geological Survey. They detail the surface features of a given region. Unlike an atlas or road map, topos show detailed information: the location of little-known public campgrounds, hiking trails, old mining sites, ghost towns and long abandoned narrow-gauge railroads.

We all have a little bit of adventurous spirit hidden away . . . fantasies of finding that out-of-the-way spot where we can discover a reminder of another civilization and uncover some kind of man-made artifact, other than a sun-bleached beer can.

An avid outdoorsman, I've learned that obvious treasure-hunting spots are overlooked as we travel across the nation. As an example, let's drive west of Milford on Utah 21. The old Frisco mining site (about 15 miles away) is noted on our highway map. Our topo of the same area indicates a narrow-gauge railroad once crossed the highway about two miles west of Milford. The same rails paralleled Utah 21 about two miles north of the highway, terminating at Frisco.

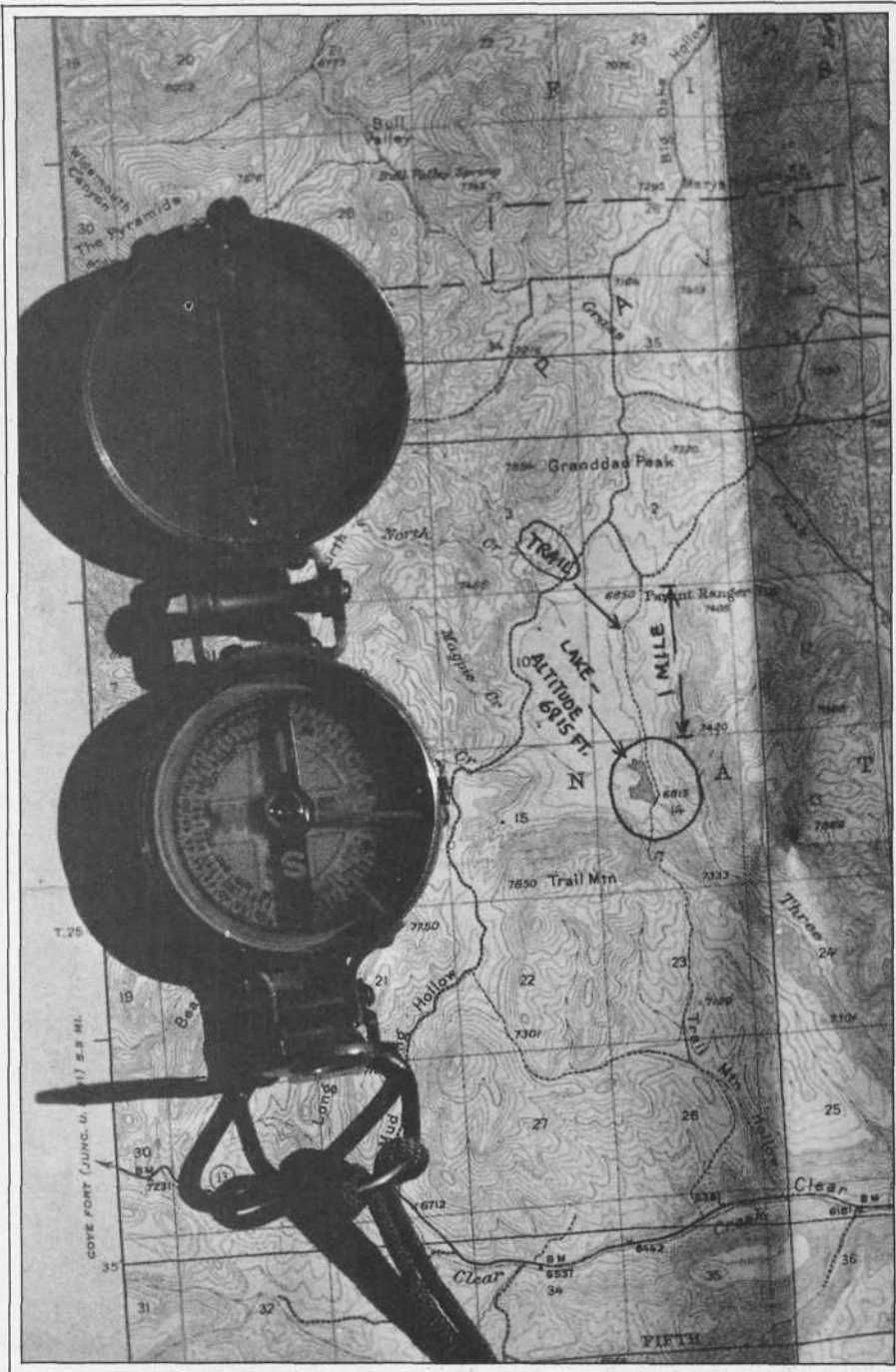
Approximately one mile farther west, the topo shows an access road that in-

tersects the old railroad grade. The legend on the map indicates a fair or dry-weather, unimproved surface road. Following this route to the railroad grade, we walk a few hundred yards along the grade with a mineral/metal detector and uncover

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**Once you learn to read and understand a topographical map and its legend, the adventures are unlimited.**

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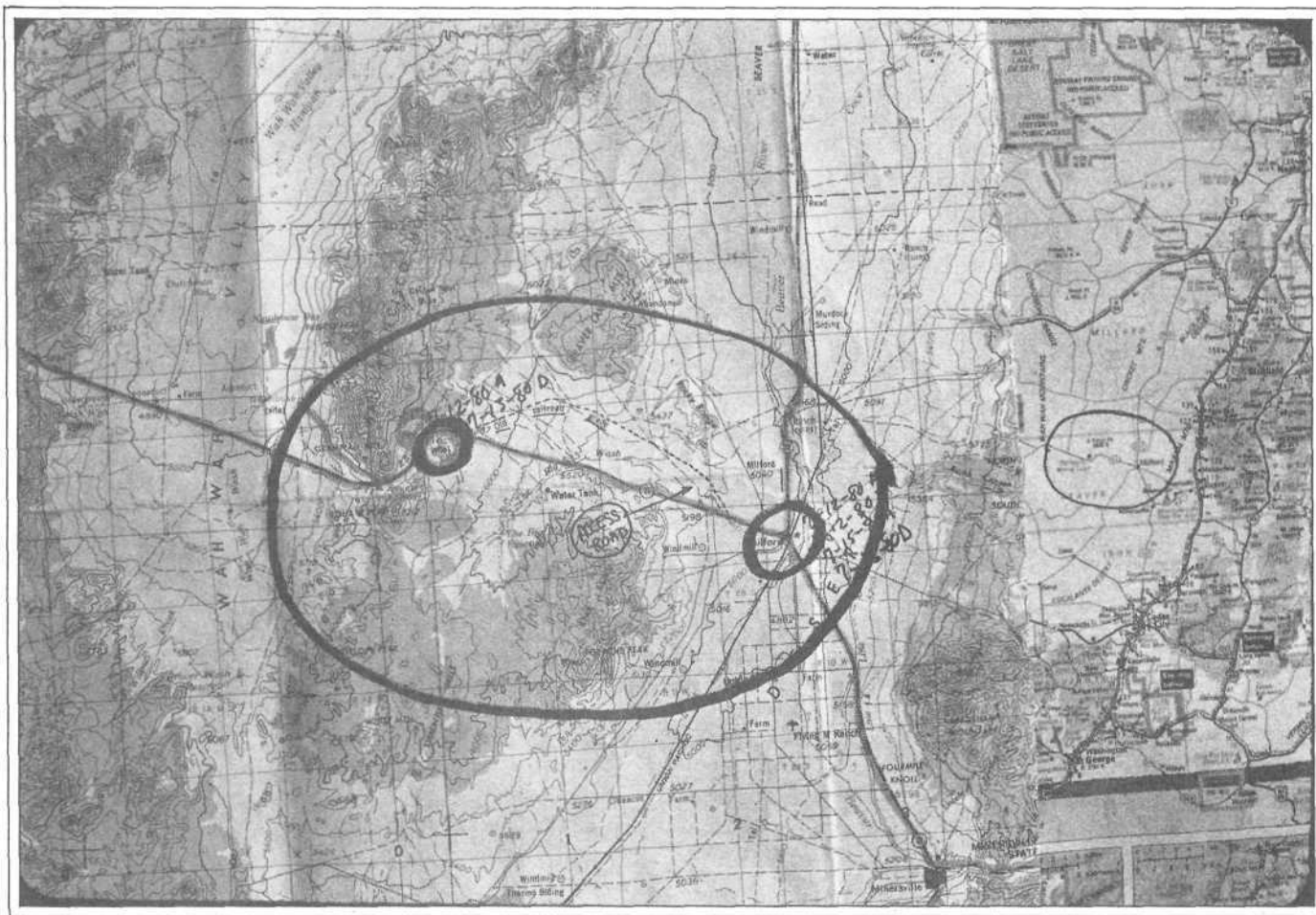


souvenirs of another century: dated nails, shell casings and glass bottles.

If you like to explore old mining sites, topos won't necessarily tell you what kinds of mines are in the area, but they will show you the exact locations. Many abandoned diggings in the western United States still contain such precious metals as gold and silver or deposits of turquoise, obsidian (Apache tears) and other beautiful stones.

Topos also show the site of deserted settlements that were scattered around old mining areas. These once-thriving towns are no doubt written in debris-covered epitaphs, but pages of half-forgotten





(Above) Frisco Mining Site and the surrounding area on the topo map. Circled area on left shows additional mining locations and other interesting details not included on ordinary highway maps.

A hiking trail to a high mountain lake was indicated on a topo. Access to the trail was found near an often-traveled highway, approximately two miles from the lake.

history unfold and take shape as you dig through the rubble or uncover interesting finds with the detector.

With the aid of topos, I've found secluded campgrounds, tucked away in high mountain canyons, where the only sound is a swift stream echoing against centuries old handiwork. Valleys of pioneer history lie within a few miles of main highways. Some are in wilderness areas, yet are accessible to vehicles pulling trailers.

A compass and a topo can guide you to that little-known lake or stream where the fish wouldn't know what to do if a baited hook sank slowly from the surface. Hiking trails or remote roads may lead you there. If not, the topo will also indicate what kind

of terrain is between you and an enjoyable fishing trip. Once you learn to read and understand a topographical map and its legend, the adventures are unlimited.

Maps are available in a variety of sizes and scales. The most common is about the size of a state highway map and covers a region of approximately 225 square miles, with a 1:250,000 scale. Altitude of the terrain is shown in contour intervals of 200 feet, with supplementary contours at 100-foot intervals.


Survey maps with a scale of 1:62,500 and contour intervals of 50 feet detail the terrain in an area of approximately 125 square miles and fold to a handy size to stuff into your back pocket while hiking.

Forestry Service charts, known as Township maps, show which regions are controlled by the Bureau of Land Management and the Forestry Service, as well as

privately owned land. These detail the area with a one-half-inch to a mile scale. Accuracy is excellent. You can follow a stream or access road and associate changes of direction on the map.

If there's a good library near you, do a little research. Find out what kind of history belongs to the region of your interest. Then you can plot your course. The library should have topographical maps on file. Either Xerox a section of the map or jot down the map reference number, located on the map's upper right hand corner.

Topos also include an insert index next to the map legend that divides the state and in some cases portions of bordering states into grids. Each grid represents a map, and each map is cataloged by the reference number.

With all this data, you can order the desired topographical map from the nearest United States Forestry Service district office or the United States Geological survey (Box 25286, Federal Center, Denver, CO 80225; 1200 S. Eads Street, Arlington, VA 22202). Prices fluctuate with the economy. A free topographical map price list is available from the Arlington USGS office. 

**Find out what kind of history belongs to the region of your interest. Then you can plot your course.**



# The SALINE SETTLEMENTS

**Pueblo villages that lived in written history for less than 100 years before they were deserted, left to the winds and the treasure-seekers of later times.**

**by April M. Kopp**

**E**ARLY IN THE 16th century, while Henry VIII was pursuing Anne Boleyn and a German named Martin Luther was pursuing Reformation, halfway across the world's stage, a drama of another sort was unfolding. The setting was a wide and beautiful valley in the heart of our present-day Southwest, a valley of high, dry desert, ringed by mesa and mountain, split by a river and its silvery path of cottonwood groves.

This was the land of the great river—Rio Grande—and of the Pueblo Indians (the name comes from the Spanish word for town and village). They were of many tribes and linguistic stocks, each one governed separately, but they had in common a sedentary, agricultural existence in their terraced cities, and a shared fear and hatred of their nomadic and war-like neighbors, chiefly the Navajo and Apache.

The most precariously situated groups of this pueblo culture were those who lived east of the Manzano ("apple-tree") Mountains, in the so-called Saline Province. Some of their communities have been completely lost in the confusion of time, but the seven names that remain are Chililí, Tajique, Torreón, Manzano, Quarái, Abó and the place that came to be known as Gran Quivira. They lived in written history for less than 100 years before they were deserted, left to the winds and the treasure-seekers of later times.

Unlike the river people, who built their cities of adobe, the Salines built of native sandstone. Their villages began on the piney eastern slopes of the Manzanos and ran south into desert country with little permanent water. Theirs was a moody, panoramic land, subject to fierce winters and glowing wildflower springtimes. Below and to the east of them swept barren and desolate plains. On these forbidding flatlands lay the source of their bleak wealth—the Accursed Lakes—which gave them salt in the shimmering white lagoons from which the Salines got their name. This was the realm of Salt Old-Woman, the personification of this precious substance, and those who came on pilgrimages to gather it brought corn meal and prayer sticks and paid her homage. Cut off from their river neighbors by the mountains,

the Salines were especially vulnerable to the marauding Apache.

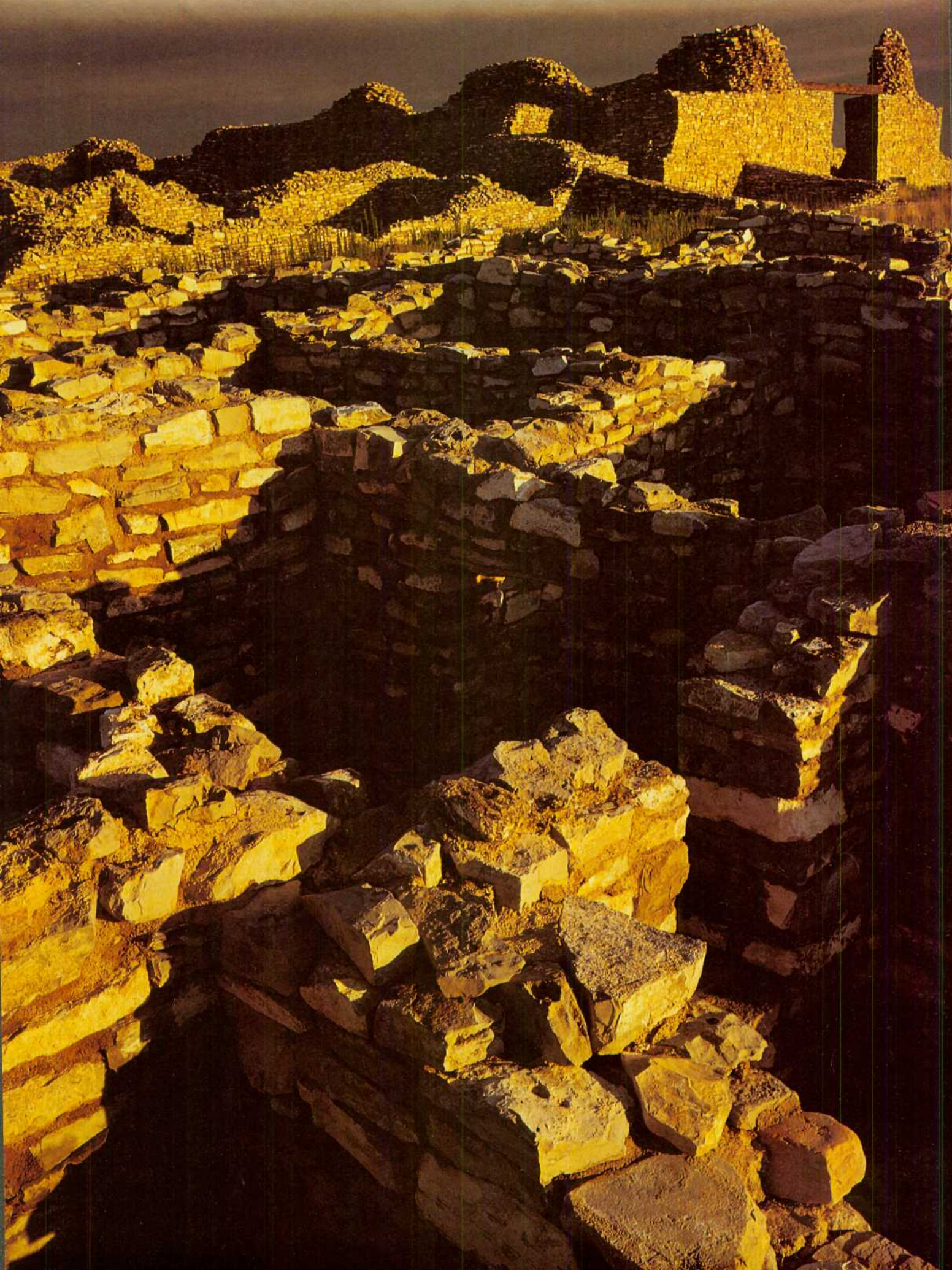
For many centuries, the Pueblo Indians cultivated corn, beans, squash and cotton; they dressed in buckskin and woven tunics and created fine baskets, pictographs and exquisite pottery without the use of a pottery wheel. They sang and prayed to their gods, and waged occasional war with each other and the raiders of the plains. They built their many-storied cities with ladders that could be pulled up in times of siege. They had long-established trade routes, swapping their crafts, turquoise and foodstuffs for buffalo hides from the eastern plains, bright feathers from Mexico and shells from California. Charles Lummis, in his excellent book, *The Land of Poco Tiempo*, says the Pueblo "traded not only with his brethren, but with Apache, Comanche, Navajo and Ute . . . None was too savage to be customer; and having traded with his visitors by day, he shut them out by night, and slept with his hand on his scalp . . ." It was an extraordinary civilization for people who had neither beast of burden nor metal tool nor wheel. Life went on for generations without a whisper of the monumental change that was coming, moving slowly but inexorably northward from the strife-ridden lands of the Aztec.

The first hint of change came almost mid-century, in the form of rumors first reaching the river valley from Zuni in the west, and spreading east to the Salines—rumors of pale-skinned men who rode the backs of monsters with great teeth that devoured humans. This was Coronado's band, following the trail of the first Europeans to penetrate New Mexico's pueblos, Esteban the Moor and Fray Marcos—following a shining dream of Cibola and seven cities of gold. Finding nothing but poor Zunis in the land of Cibola, they were ripe targets for the fateful story that led them onward to Quivira. The Quivira myth was born in the mind of a plains Indian, a captive of pueblo peoples who, because of his appearance, the Spaniards dubbed the Turk. The Turk had

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*You can almost hear the ghostly murmurs at sunrise in the ruins of the pueblos and mission in Gran Quivira.*







# SALINE SETTLEMENTS

APRIL KOPP



*Settling into the sand, the ruins at Abó are a timeworn monument to the past.*

**Dust clouds hung darkly over the plains; the buffalo, the deer, the elk, even the wolves and coyotes had vanished. The wilderness was empty, dead.**

discerned that the newcomers were seeking a yellow stone, and thinking he could use that obsession to lose them on the trackless prairies and escape home again, he began telling them of rich and wonderful cities to the east, cities with so much gold and silver and jewels that they could not carry it all away. Made gullible by greed, the Spaniards followed him eastward until they finally arrived in present-day Kansas and the home of the Quivira; a very poor tribe that dwelt in grass-roofed huts. The Turk was killed for his deceit. Coronado's mission was a disaster, and the golden cities a myth and a hoax, but the facts could not kill the fable. The Quivira was a vision which, phoenix-like, rose again and again from its own ashes, and as we shall see, was so consuming that the lands and lives of the Pueblos would never again be the same.

After Coronado, the Indians had a respite that lasted a generation before the lust for gold turned the face of New Spain north once more — this time with conquest in mind. The pale men came in small clusters at first, bringing members of another group that would leave an indelible mark on pueblo society: the Franciscan friars, and with them began the written history of the river valley and the Saline people.

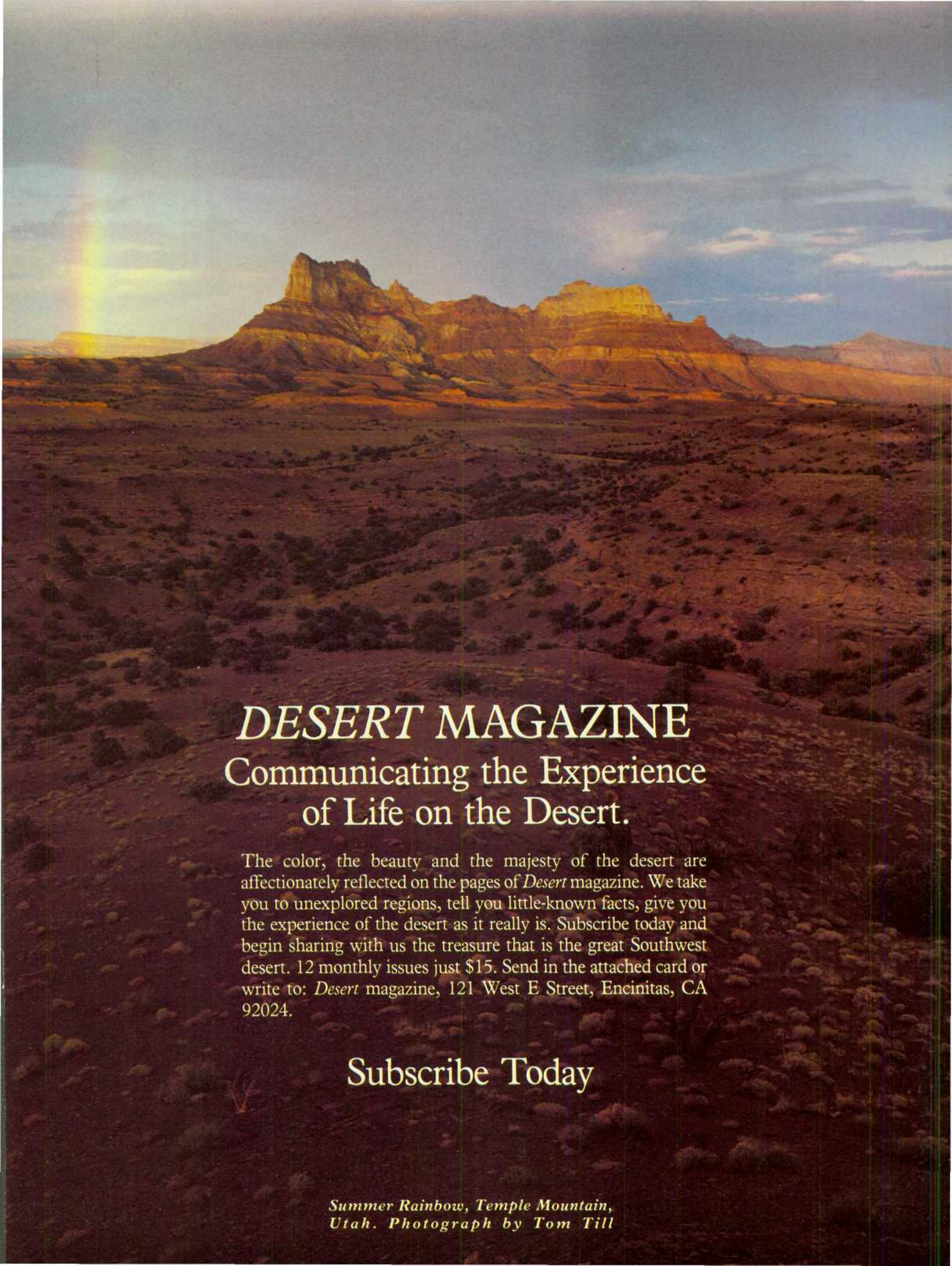
Then in 1598, Oñate, the newly-appointed Governor and Captain General of the area, lumbered into the Rio Grande Valley with his four-mile-long procession of soldiers and colonists. The fearful Indians must have realized

the Spaniards had come to stay. The conflicts were bloody but brief. Stone missile and bows and arrows were no match for helmeted men with guns and cannon, and conquest was soon accomplished—all the kingdoms and provinces of New Mexico were claimed in the name of King Philip of Spain. The conquerors brought many strange things to their new subjects. They brought animals that could be domesticated for work and for food: cattle, horses, sheep, burros and goats; they brought metal tools and firearms, grapes and wine, wheat and fruit trees; they brought smallpox, tuberculosis and diphtheria; they brought writing and Catholicism.

The padres who came through such hardships were Franciscans, committed to poverty and to saving the souls of the heathen. Though some were harsh and unyielding in the arrogance of their faith, most believed they were truly civilizers and teachers. In 1598—more than two decades before the Mayflower dropped anchor in the east—a chaplain in Oñate's army was assigned to the Saline Pueblos and their religious conversion began.

**F**ROM THE VERY beginning, the Spanish Conquest wore two faces—cross versus crown. Much of the tragedy that befell the conquered peoples grew out of this controversy. Their goals were at odds—God versus gold. Little compromise could be reached.



A full-page photograph of a desert landscape at sunset. In the background, a large, flat-topped mountain (Temple Mountain) is silhouetted against a sky with soft, colorful clouds. A faint rainbow is visible on the left side of the sky. The foreground consists of rolling desert hills covered in sparse, low-lying vegetation. The overall color palette is dominated by warm, golden, and reddish tones from the sunset.

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*Summer Rainbow, Temple Mountain,  
Utah. Photograph by Tom Till*



# SALINE SETTLEMENTS



APRIL KOPP

*Three centuries of neglect have not erased the impact of the mission in the wilderness of Gran Quivira.*

**Life went on for generations without a whisper of the monumental change that was coming, moving slowly but inexorably northward from the strife-ridden lands of the Aztec.**

The Church held that all men, no matter how barbaric, had souls and were capable of being educated. None was born slave; free will and reasoning were common to all. The friars wanted strict laws passed, but they remained only ideals. Concessions were increasingly granted to civil authorities and wealthy landowners, and the power struggle intensified.

By the middle of the 17th Century, the battle was at its peak, with the bewildered pueblo peoples in the middle. There had been a series of especially severe and greedy governors in Santa Fe; the enforced labor and taxation of the Indians had never been harsher. The mission friars, who complained of unfair exploitation of the Indians were, in turn, using them to build their churches and were zealously stamping out age-old tribal customs and ceremonies. The clergy, who claimed immunity from civil law and wielded the powerful threat of excommunication, were backed by the Inquisition, which was already established in New Mexico. Smallpox, an imported disease, had decimated the populations of many pueblos. There were complaints from both sides regarding the other side's misconduct with Indian women, and both majesties freely used corporal punishment to castigate Indian miscreants. No wonder the natives were restless.

Nowhere was this situation more intolerable than in the Saline Province, where it finally came to a head. The civil authority over this area was Captain Nicolas de Aguilar, a known

murderer from Mexico. He was so diligent in carrying out the avaricious programs of the governor in Santa Fe that the friars dubbed him the Attila of New Mexico. He obliged the Indians to gather great loads of salt and piñon nuts and transport them to various officials; they were made to carry maize, wash hides and tan leather. The friars, who needed that labor for mission service and for building—notably three grand churches at Quarái, Abó and Gran Quivira—protested loudly. Aguilar responded by forbidding the Indians to attend mass or do any church work. At Quarái, some natives were whipped for singing in the choir. He further enraged the missionaries by ordering the Indians, under threat of physical punishment, to perform their ancient “diabolical dances.” The Church retaliated by excommunicating Aguilar, and bitterly exaggerated charges and countercharges crossed between Santa Fe, Mexico and Spain. Aguilar ended up, along with the governor, before the Holy Office of the Inquisition in Mexico City.

Medicine men were operating secretly within most pueblos at this time; fear and superstition were rampant. At Abó, a German was arrested by the Inquisition for practicing witchcraft, including selling bits of paper that, when swallowed, would make the Indian invisible to his enemies. The natives, who were willing to absorb the trappings of Christianity, had obviously not absorbed the spiritual subtleties. Most important, they had discovered that the



new prayers were no better than the old in causing rains to fall and crops to ripen and they could see that justice preached was different from justice practiced. Throughout the Rio Grande Valley and neighboring pueblos, the seeds of discontent were spreading, growing strong in fertile ground.

At the very height of this turmoil, nonpartisan Fate stepped in, bringing what was to be the deathblow for the Saline Pueblos. It was drought, and with it famine and pestilence spread across the land. As the dry years continued, Spaniards and Indians alike saw their stored grain and seed corn disappear, the land become as graphically described by the historian John Upton Terrell:

*Usual summer cloudbursts that swept in across the mesas like great purple brooms did not come. The grass that had started with spring thaw was soon burnt to powder and the ranges lay parched and bare. The little creeks were consumed by the thirsty earth, and even the Rio Grande was hardly more than a thin sheet of wetness . . . There were no piñon nuts, no wild herbs or roots or berries . . . The wild creatures were gone—where, no one knew. Dust clouds hung darkly over the plains, but the buffalo and the deer and the elk and even wolves and coyotes had vanished. The wilderness was empty, dead.*

Many Indians starved to death, and as the country suffered hatred and hunger, still another menace plagued it: the scourge of the plains, the Red Death—the Apache. The disappearance of game from their lands and the lack of grain in the pueblos fueled their fury, and their raids on white man and Indian alike became especially fierce, especially merciless.


Again, it was the Saline peoples who were hardest hit. Their vulnerability and weakness made them easy marks for savage depredations that swept in unexpectedly from the plains. Indeed, the raids grew so frequent that the starving and terrified survivors began to desert their villages and flee to others and finally out of the province altogether. Between 1669 and 1675, one by one they emptied, until nothing was left but crumbling ruins of the houses and the great churches. The people never returned to their ill-fated homes, and these Saline villages have since come to be known as the “cities that died of fear.” Their chambers and fields were vacant when, in 1680, the pueblos forgot their own differences and rose as one people to drive the Spanish from their lands. The first revolutionary war in this country, fought for the same reasons as the one we celebrate—oppression, unjust taxation and the freedom to worship as they pleased—was the Pueblo Insurrection, and its bloody aftermath left the river valley free of the white man until 1692, when De Vargas reconquered it for good.

The story of the cities that died of fear does not end with their abandonment: Even though the people never returned, the legend that brought the Spaniards to New Mexico in the

first place came ultimately to this isolated area to rest. Charles Lummis wrote, “The myth of the Quivira, for centuries a vagabond, sat down at last in one of the astounding ruins of the Manzano Plains.” How the myth survived at all, much less traveled from a poor tribe in Kansas to a small sandstone ruin (Gran Quivira) near the salt lakes of New Mexico, remains one of history’s most bizarre mysteries. But survive it did, as Lummis elucidates:

*Here is the asylum of the modern Quivira-myth; the Mecca of the Southwestern fortune-hunter; the field of the Last Folly. That it should have been chosen from among all the 1,500 pueblo ruins in New Mexico for credulity to butt its head against, is not strange physically. Its bleak, unearthly site, the necromancy of the plains, its ghostly aspect, and its distance from all water were enough to stop and hold the later treasure-seekers, who had heard vaguely that “Coronado hunted the Quivira,” but utterly failed to hear that he found it—found it in northeastern Kansas, and found it worthless.*

For more than two centuries after reconquest, they came from as far away as Europe and South America, came in possession of secret maps, charts, deathbed disclosures, mysterious guides and miracle visions. Finding naught in one village, they moved to the next. They dug shafts and tunneled and chipped away at the sandstone ruins and left, so far as anyone knows, empty-handed. Still the rumors persisted and still they came.

Today, the seven Saline villages stand, in one form or another, in surroundings that have remained essentially the same since the pueblo people built them. Chililí, Tajique, Torreón and Manzano are the sites of tiny, picturesque, Mexican-American communities. The remaining three have standing ruins which, though inhabited only by ghosts, have been rescued from vandals and fortune-hunters by the authorities; Quarai and Abó are now state monuments and Gran Quivira is a national monument. Driving along this route takes you back 300 years, and as you wander through these places, still isolated, lonely outposts on the edge of still empty and barren plains, you can hear bygone village sounds, and echos of the last Apache. 



**Theirs was a moody, panoramic land, subject to fierce winters and glowing wildflower springtimes.**



# PORTRAIT OF AN ARTIST

*Ted DeGrazia: Artist, Desert Dweller,  
sometimes Prospector, Adventurer,  
Movie Maker, Philosopher.*

by Rick Lanning

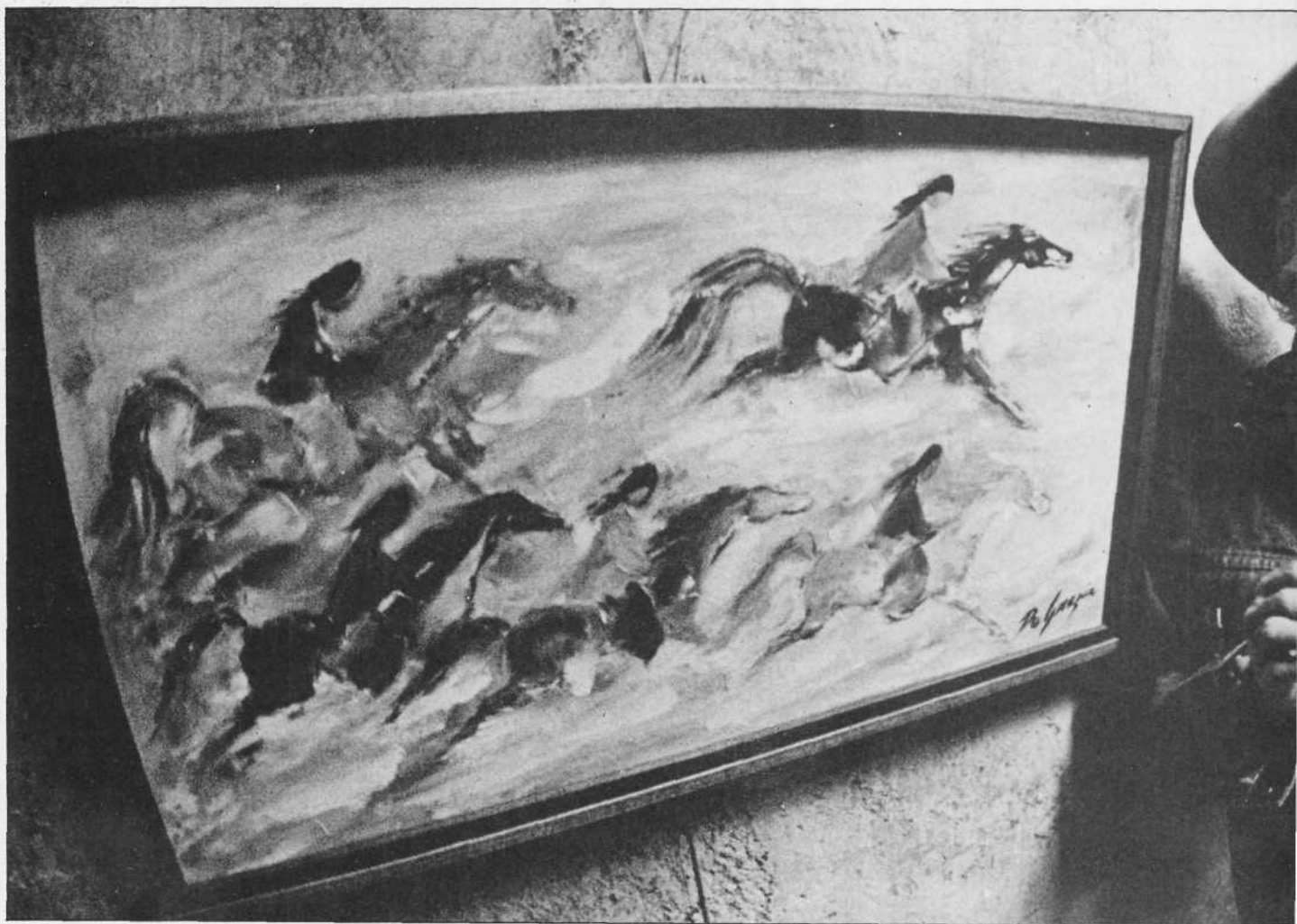
**I**T IS A difficult but worthy challenge to try to define a man who wishes he could burn \$1.5 million worth of paintings to protest unfair tax laws; who looks upon death as a friend rather than an enemy; who at 71 would rather ride a horse into the Superstition Mountains and camp out in a sleeping bag than to visit the great hotels of the world, which he could easily afford; and who renews himself on a daily basis by the solitude he finds in himself and in his mountains.

Such a man is Ted DeGrazia, artist, desert dweller, sometimes prospector, adventurer, movie maker and philosopher.

DeGrazia's world is strange and intriguing. He claims to love privacy, yet he will do almost anything to publicize his art work. As for his "solitude," he rarely goes into the mountains with less than a dozen friends. To DeGrazia, an experience means little unless there is some sharing.

Invite him to your home for dinner and he'll turn you down, but come by his Gallery of the Sun Studio in Tucson (his home is within a stone's throw of the gallery) and he'll pour you a good drink.

PAUL DEGRUCCIO





DeGrazia is bearded and blue-eyed, a small bear of a man whose nut-brown skin and patient bearing make a mockery of the pell-mell attitude that rules most men's lives. He believes in a daily renewal of the spirit and body. Recently he was feeling ill. The doctors suspected flu and recommended rest.

"We can't give you a pill to do you any good," the physician said. But the artist had already decided what pill was necessary. He had planned a weekend in the Superstitions. He ignored the doctor's advice to cancel the trip and took his friends on horseback up to Weaver's Needle. When he came out of the mountains, he was fresh, re-charged and healthy.

His friends on these trips may include doctors, a federal judge, cowboys, an historian, Mexicans and Indians. There will probably be a writer and a couple of photographers, not so much because DeGrazia is stuck on himself, but because he can rarely get away without someone learning about it and insisting they come along. Once a woman reporter from a Tucson television station asked if she could accompany him.

"Suit yourself," said DeGrazia, "but

be sure you wear your anti-rattlesnake shoes." She thought he was kidding. That weekend the horse wranglers killed no less than six rattlers along the trail, including a giant six-footer.

He holds three college degrees, which he achieved late in life, yet he distrusts politicians and modern education, believing that, "Too much school makes people slaves to society. It just produces more tax money and gives politicians money to throw away."

DeGrazia is thought to be the world's most reproduced artist of modern times, with countless prints hanging in homes and galleries around the globe. He is worth an estimated \$10 million, yet is content to wear the same outfit in winter, summer and spring: old jeans and shirts, western boots and hat. His only show of wealth is the gold and turquoise Indian jewelry he wears on his wrists.

Once on the *Today* show, Gene Shalit observed rather rudely, "You sure wear funny clothes." DeGrazia, who had a western-brimmed hat long before John Travolta and Willie Nelson made them urban chic, retorted, "In my country, you'd be the one with the funny

Over the years I have found DeGrazia to be a kind man, much more gentle than his normal brusque personality seems to indicate. Shorty Thorn, who traveled with DeGrazia for many years and who was his closest friend, said he had never seen the artist lose his temper.

"He's a generous person and a lot of people have taken advantage of Ted," said Shorty a few months before he died in 1979. He was a wisp of a man whose cowboy hat seemed too large for his body. Shorty was born and bred back east, but after moving to Arizona became a cowpuncher of sorts. He could roll a cigarette with one hand and sit a horse as well as DeGrazia. He, too, was an artist and once became incensed when DeGrazia described his art as "primitive." Said Shorty, "I thought he was insulting me."

DeGrazia doesn't talk much about Shorty's death. He will talk about the good times they had together.

"I lost a friend," he says. "Shorty is part of the mountains now. We'll get together one of these days."

**V**ISITORS FROM many parts of the world come to DeGrazia's galleries in Tucson and Apache Junction. He spends a lot of time at his Tucson gallery, signing autographs, sipping tequila or mescal with his friends and greeting visitors like he had known them all his life.

"You're from Minnesota? I knew a mining engineer from back there once. How's the snow? Bet you're glad you came to Arizona."

His paintings, which sell for upward of \$30,000 each, have been reproduced on many diverse art forms, from glasses to gold, silver to pewter, on greeting cards and in bronze. Once he cancelled an \$80,000-a-year contract with Hallmark—they were paying him for the rights to reprint his paintings on their greeting card line—simply because he discovered his bank accounts were full. The Hallmark people were astounded.

His friends, like his interests, are diverse. They include show business types like Broderick Crawford and country western singer Sammi Smith; Dr. Joe Rogers, a top Tucson cardiologist; western author Louis Lamour; one-eyed prospectors; Indians from the interior of Mexico; poor Mexicans; and young people who are alienated from society. DeGrazia takes them all to himself.

He considers himself a modern painter who paints expression.

"It's realistic in that you can read the subjects, but not photographic," he says. "Which is best? Who knows? The best is

**"If I get to the point  
where I don't know  
where I am going, I sit  
and wait and the magic  
always comes."**

clothes." His world is the southwest.

He paints Indians, Mexicans and other themes connected with the southwest. He compares his art with religion and says, "I paint because it's the will of God."

He was born to an Apache mother and immigrant Italian father in Morenci, a copper mining town in northeastern Arizona. His father died of a lung disease he contracted in the mines.

Growing up in the mountains and desert, DeGrazia took time to learn about the land, animals and people. He grew into an above average carpenter and builder. The Indians became his friends and called him *simpatico*. It translates as well into Italian as into Apache. It means the way one person relates to another. It has much to do with respect and very little to do with a person's wealth or importance. On the trail, all men are alike.

*The man and his image.*





# DeGrazia

whichever speaks to you. You must make that choice. A professional artist paints with all of himself. The insides, plus your hide. When part of your hide is on the painting, only then will it be good."

An artist once asked him for advice. The artist was young, enthused and immature. DeGrazia told him, "First you must be able to grow a beard, and then you must wait until it turns white."

DeGrazia speaks a delightful mixture of Apache, Italian, Spanish and cowboy jargon. It confuses those whose noses may be a bit long and out of joint, but it isn't really that hard to understand. An Apache girl who worked part-time at his Tucson gallery while attending the University of Arizona said, "People who have a good heart can understand Ted. The others? They are vultures, after his paintings or his money. I would spit on

laborers, graceful Yaqui women laboring in fields.

In 1950, he loaded his tools into a Model A Ford and headed up a dirt trail. Under a blistering Arizona sun, with a handful of Yaquis to help, he built a mission in the memory of the Virgin of Guadalupe.

"When I was living in Mexico City, existing on 10 cents a day American money, I asked the Virgin for help," shrugged DeGrazia. "She gave me help, and my career flourished. So I decided to do something for her."

There was a door with no lock, a roof exposed to birds and nature. The window frames were made of the ribs of saguaro cacti. He created a crucified Christ in mortar, with blood streaming down the Savior's battered head. He placed a madonna in the adobe. When the mission was completed just before Christmas Day, 1952, DeGrazia and his friends placed *luminarias* along the walls and candles in the cactus.

They stayed warm by drinking

homemade tequila and eating tamales. DeGrazia, his blue eyes gleaming, said, "There was a lot of music and dancing. The Lady of Guadalupe was with us."

DeGrazia likes to drink. He always has a bottle of Yaqui brandy or rough, burning mescal within reach. Once, at a fashionable store in Phoenix, DeGrazia agreed to autograph plates and other items he had created. On the table, in full view of the hundreds of persons lined up, was a bottle of scotch whiskey. From time to time, DeGrazia would sip it or offer it to a friend to drink. Nobody in the crowd objected. Many people smiled approvingly as DeGrazia sipped from the bottle.

"I don't know of anybody else who could get away with that here," said the store manager later. "DeGrazia can do the most outrageous things. The people love him."

He makes his own mescal out of cactus, using a special secret recipe created by his Yaqui friends. Once a batch of mescal went wrong and a friend who had

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**"I like to be around people who stimulate me—young people are like that. Especially the dreamers."**

---

them, but Ted wouldn't let me. He is too kind."

He paints renegade Apaches, Navajos, Papagos, Pimas, Yaquis, Cocopahs and other tribes. He also paints Mexicans, but with respect and dignity. Because of his strong religious upbringing, he portrays madonnas as natives and Indians as angels.

His canvas is filled with children whose beautiful black eyes look at the world with awe and innocence.

"They are close to God," says the artist.

As a child he worked with desert clay, picking it up near his home and creating animal figures which he baked to hardness in his mother's oven. There was a magic in the figures; the magic continues today.

His work is symbolized by bright dazzling colors: Blazing cockfights, Indians suffering for their faith, children in poverty, fast horses, bullfights,

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*DeGrazia and his favorite buckskin, a companion in solitude.*





been sampling it cried out, "Ted, I've gone blind!"

"Relax," said DeGrazia, waving his hand. "It won't last."

It didn't. DeGrazia found out what he had done wrong, made some changes, and they continued drinking.

In 1979 he donated a painting to the Esperanza Hospital Ship so the non-profit organization could make copies of the painting and sell them in a fund-raising effort. The Esperanza staff was so grateful they invited DeGrazia to fly down to the Amazon at their expense to visit the people being served by the free floating hospital. DeGrazia politely refused. He hates to fly, and no amount of persuasion could make him change his mind.

An historical figure who made an early imprint on him was Father Kino, the Italian Jesuit who helped settle the southwest and who taught the Indians how to farm. DeGrazia devotes much of his time to defining and painting the spirit of Kino as well as the Indians the

padre helped to convert to Catholicism.

DeGrazia says, "I believe in the spirit of Kino. He still roams over Arizona and New Mexico. I feel him."

**I**T'S SOMETIMES hard to separate truth from legend in DeGrazia's life. He says he was married seven times and has 23 children. His present wife, Marian, smiles indulgently and adds nothing to the conversation. Obviously she has heard this story before.

He considers sleep a waste of time and says, "I sleep hard but for short intervals. If I get to the point where I don't know where I am going, I sit and wait and the magic always comes."

His world includes a God whom he calls "the beginning and the end. He can rock you in his arms or drown you at the end of the universe. He is God. God is everywhere and stands for everything that is good and beautiful. A flower, a beautiful sky, love. God is life, but God is also death. A forever peace."

His feelings about dying are similar to the Apaches, who see death as a friend.

"You are put into this world to live, to work, to create and to enjoy God's riches," says DeGrazia. "You are also here to endure and to suffer. Any other way would be against God's plan."

He considers life important and says good doctors and *curanderos* are "vital in the scheme of things," but adds, "When you get old and things start falling apart, if you can't fix it with baling wire, the hell with it."

As he gets older, DeGrazia says he finds himself wanting less and less.

"Friends are important, but they take time," he says. "I like to be around people who stimulate me—young people are like that. Especially the dreamers. Every child needs time and room to daydream. It's an important part of growing up."

A couple of years ago, DeGrazia went into the Superstitions and buried 80 paintings in a tunnel. His lone witness was an Indian boy who helped him carry the paintings into the mountains. The



PETER BALESTRERO

**"A professional artist paints with all of himself. The insides, plus your hide. When part of your hide is on the painting, only then will it be good."**

boy has vowed silence on where the paintings are buried.

"For the last 75 years, people have been looking for the Lost Dutchman Gold Mine," he says, smiling so the gold in his teeth shows. "Nobody has found it and some say maybe it's not even there. Now I've given them a real 'Lost Dutchman' to look for. Anyone who finds the paintings can have them."

He says if he could legally arrange it so that his heirs wouldn't be saddled with unbearable taxes, he would burn all of his paintings at the moment of his death.

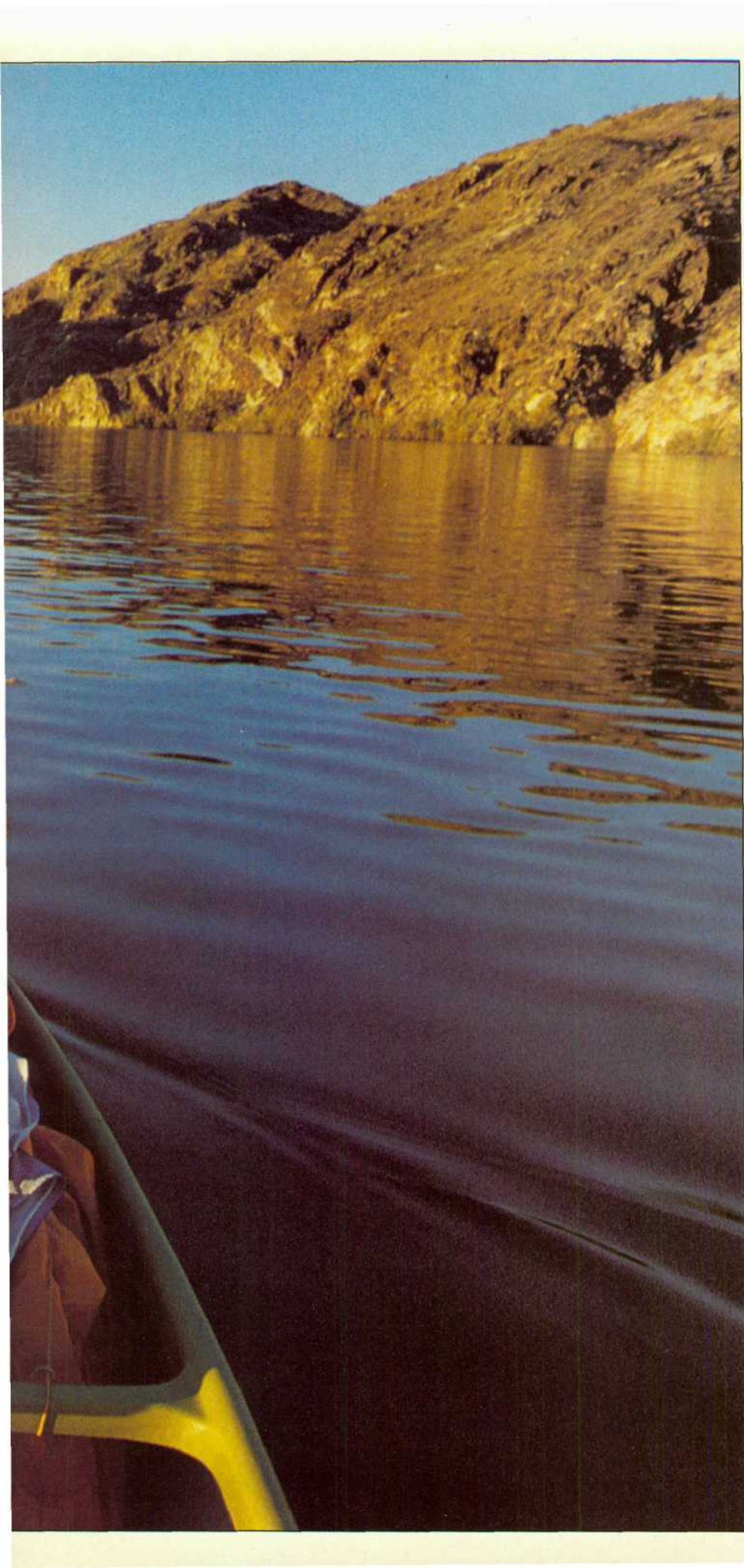
"Hell, I created the things and I should have the right to destroy them," says DeGrazia. "But the government doesn't see it that way. They'd probably figure some way to pull me back from the grave to pay up." **2**

Silent Prayer, one of DeGrazia's most popular paintings.









# Easy on the River

**The kids are great,  
the river is generous  
and the gorge is  
beautiful.**



*(Above) A gourmet delight on the river—  
peanut butter, strawberry jam and Fritos.*

*(Left) Cool, mellow and inviting, the river  
spreads like satin under the desert sun.*





*(Above) Taking time to enjoy the surroundings, each in his own manner.*

*(Right) The river's smooth flow contrasts with the texture of the gorge walls.*





# Easy on the River

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**Text and Photography  
by Stephen Simpson**

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**W**E ARE on a YMCA trip, and I am one of two leaders. All of the kids are 14 or 15, from north San Diego County. None of us have canoed before, although we all can swim. The river is gentle. There are no rapids, no crocodiles or hostile natives, but we will make fine adventure of it. We have never been here and we are eager.

We head for the gentle Colorado, south of Lake Mohave, which is south of Lake Mead, which is east of Las Vegas—the California/Arizona border. It's as unattractive a place as any on the map. The main feature is the river. In the August heat, the river is something to be grateful for.

Tuesday morning, we secure the canoes on the trailer, pack our gear and ourselves in the van and leave the cool sea air of Encinitas, California. Two hours later, we are wrapped in heat as we drive through the Coachella Valley. By the time I turn the van north along the river in the afternoon, we are bathed in sweat, especially where backs and legs meet plastic seats. We find the reality of summer desert heat and smell the river, just east of the highway and out of sight. The kids are more patient and less restless than any group of adults could have been. We amuse ourselves guessing the origins of the names of the surrounding mountains. Where did they come from, the Turtles, Stepladders and Chemehuevis? The Whipples, Bill Williams and Big Marias? One boy suggests we name a mountain for a large girl sitting by the side door. She suggests we name a snake after him. We keep on guessing, laughing and sweating.

I like these kids. They laugh a lot. They are physically uncomfortable, but they're enjoying themselves. They are not afraid to laugh at me, either. I am one of them in my ability to enjoy, and they love it.

At Needles, we find a campsite by the

river, unpack, arrange to get the van down to Lake Havasu and quickly get in the water—not necessarily in that order.

The kids are quick to get the canoes in the water and get a feel for them before we go downriver tomorrow morning. The relief of getting in the water is sacramental. The restraining patience the kids showed in the van disappears. They race canoes, overturn canoes, sink canoes, play tag, splash and chase frisbees and each other. They rinse off the “getting here” and bathe in the “being here,” and I'm right in there with them.

Most of them came together as strangers, but soon set up spontaneous partnerships and friendships. Again, I am pleased and surprised by their common

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**We paddle and drift  
slowly, but it is always  
much too fast. We want to  
stay a while, but we move  
on, leaving the moment a  
river-step behind.**

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sense, good humor and cooperation. Set free of mowing lawns, babysitting, cleaning rooms and the burden of parents, they revel in the heat and the water. They are loose in every sense of the word.

At dusk, we quickly learn who brought steaks and who brought canned vegetables; who brought the ultimate in lightweight and compact campstoves and who had foregone cooking altogether; who brought candy bars and who brought trail mix.

We sleep blanketed by the stars and the hushed rush of the river—the gentlest of sounds.

We are in the canoes and cutting south through the water at sunrise. We spread out over a few hundred yards; muffled laughter and surprise sound off the green

and brush banks. The only other sounds to break the silent movement of the river are the dip and release of the paddles and the other voice in the canoe with me. The clarity and stillness of the morning air is soothing nature's Gregorian chant, and enervating.

I have begun a mental catalog of reasons to be here, reasons to come again. It is Wednesday, but this is the stillest of still Sunday mornings. There is no city on earth this peaceful.

The river is dark. It is not wide, 100 yards at the most. It is just the right temperature; soothing but not shocking. I don't know if we should be drinking it, but it is delicious to touch.

The land we pass by is low, level and tan, stretching far away. There is little to see: no grand vistas, no vertical mountains, no thrilling canyons or cliffs . . . not yet.

At mid-morning, we beach the canoes and search out shade. The sun has warmth on the seacoast; it has weight here. I am amazed that so much water cuts through such a blistering land. I don't understand how people can live in such heat. I couldn't live like the old ladies who run the candy shop by the London Bridge at Lake Havasu. They live in the desert, going from air-conditioned house to air-conditioned car to air-conditioned work, and so on. They might as well be in Wichita or Tampa or Buffalo. If I grew up along this water, I would love it, use it and probably worship it. Exposed to such a fragile realm of comfort, I am not surprised that writers have referred to this land as the geography of hope.

We can only sit in the 100 degree shade so long, and are often back in the water. This group is wonderful, forever young, swimming and splashing and laughing wet. The sound of water is good, but the sound of water and laughter is better. There is more sun and more fresh water here than we have ever experienced.

The day goes by like middle America at the swimming hole; repetitive cycles of laughter, play and rest.

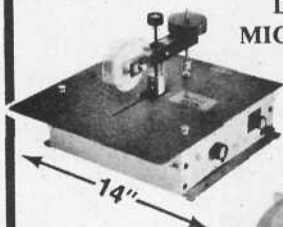


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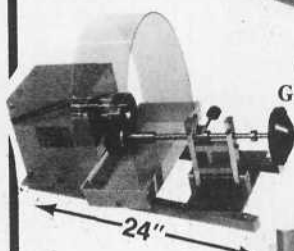
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# River

The barren and ribbed geography of the desert make it a symbol of ancient time and age. The spontaneous eruption of young mischief here is an exciting contrast to that. I feel excellent. The sun is always on my back, the water is always near, the whole day is play.

At dusk, we move further down the river. Now the land has some texture and dimension. The river has given up its banks and cuts through rock. The greenery is sparse, clinging to stone walls. It is gray, brown and roseate purple on the jagged land. Dimensions are more perpendicular here. Where the sun still catches the peaks, they are golden and magenta. The land closes in on the water.

We beach the canoes at the entrance to Topock Gorge. We will run it tomorrow morning.

The sand here is tracked by small animals. The tracks are exquisite; we wish we knew who belonged to them. Bags are laid out and campstoves hiss. Perhaps we are doing no damage, but we can see that the desert heals slowly. Our tracks are everywhere and it will be long before they are erased. Now we understand the conservationists' imperative — take only memories, leave only footprints.

We have no evening fire. We brought no wood with us and what is to be found is scarce and protected. Instead, we tell stories and jokes. The moon, stars and river laugh with us. We echo down the

**We play the same  
boisterous games of  
relays, tag and wrestling  
in the sand as we did in  
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loose, unrestrained.**

gorge. We play the same boisterous games of relays, tag and wrestling in the sand as we did in the water. We are still loose, unrestrained.

Soon we are worn out, and retire the day. Laughter moves over the sand occasionally, but at last the world is silent except for my breathing. Then I forget even that.

*A dozen cool eggs, romping in the river.*

**WAKE BUT** do not move. My wrist is eight inches from my face. I can barely see — 4:30 a.m. I cannot hear the river, though it is 30 yards away. The morning air is cool, still mixed with night air. When I move, I can feel the contours my body has made in the sand.

The sun is far from up, but it is not quite dark. What light exists seems to come from the moon, the stars and out of the walls of corrugated rock — retention from the previous day?

I am up before the others, before first light, before even the dragonflies. The nocturnal animals are just getting to sleep. The bellowing cow sounds that came from the river otters in the night are gone. The candle I propped on my flashlight to read by has melted down completely. The sand and wax made a mess of the flashlight. I make today's first tracks in the cool sand.

Eight canoes are pulled up on the beach.





In their arrangement and silence, they remind me of patient tethered horses. Fifteen sleeping bags are curled and still; dark shapes in the sand. Before I wake them, I stop to take in the silence again. When I walk, I can hear the sand under my feet. Not moving, I hear nothing: absolutely nothing.

A body moves and a groaning, grinding yawn breaks the silence. With my instigation, the kids are all soon moving. In 30 minutes, the canoes will be packed, pulled through the sand and released to the river. Yahoo!! We are awake! Our feet are wet; 16 faces and 16 paddles are on the river again.

Yesterday this was new to all of us; now we have made home of it.

Being the biggest and strongest, I am teamed again with the smallest and weakest. Soon we are far behind the others. No matter. This is no race and we

linger longer. The others are kind enough to wait for us, chide us a bit and move on. We fall behind again.

The western walls of the gorge light up with the hot sun from the east. The reflections are gorgeous. We are deep in shade; it will be hours before the sun finds us. The blistered palms and sore arms from yesterday are forgotten. We are caught up in the architectural grandeur of the gorge. We drift quietly down this lane of stone and water. We are in a cathedral we can speak in, yet voices are lost in the volume of space. Talk is silenced by the attention given the eyes. To say that it is inspirational is an understatement.

We paddle and drift slowly, but it is always much too fast. We want to stay a while, but we move on, leaving the moment a river-step behind.

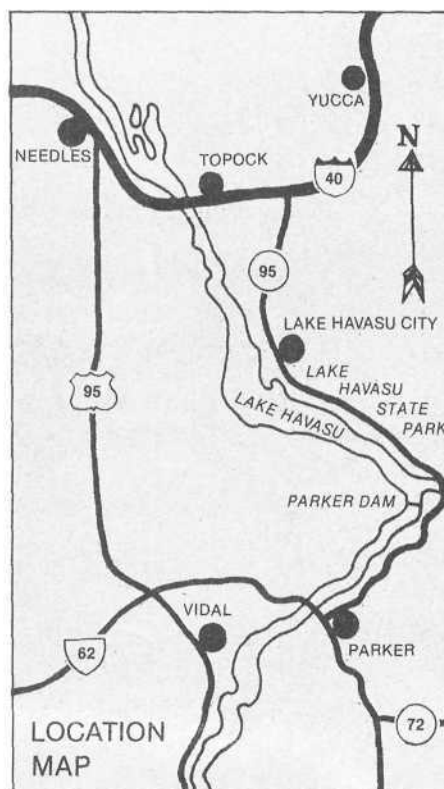
It is wonderful. This 30-mile drift is like nothing we can find at home; the clarity, the purity, and solitude. The sea is fine, but it is rarely as peaceful as this.

The river widens. The walls are not so high and we are often in bright sun. We get horizontal, dangle our feet in the water and bask in the warmth. The wide, still waters of Lake Havasu are not far off; neither is the end of our trip. We purposefully run aground on a sandspit in the middle of the river. There is no hurry to end the journey—every reason to prolong it. There is still time for more grins and slap-dash foolery in the water.

The kids are great.

The river is easy.

The gorge is beautiful.



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# Big Bend National Park

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**A reduced pace  
follows naturally  
from this vast  
expanse of  
timeless, peaceful  
desert.**

**By Jim Taulman  
and Carol Vaughan**

**Photography  
by Jim Taulman**

**M**Y FIRST trip to Big Bend National Park was in January, 1967. All I brought was my dachshund Trinka, a Fina credit card, money for food and a couple of nights in a motel and a childlike faith that in a national park all my needs would be provided for. Arriving late on the second day out from Fort Worth, I spent five maddening hours driving all over the park, searching unsuccessfully for a Fina station and a motel room. I finally found a motel vacancy in Terlingua, five miles west of the park. In the morning, I drove on, still determined to find a Fina station and save my cash. By the time I found one in Marfa, I was so far from the

park I decided not to return and disgustedly headed for home.

That was Trinka's first and last visit to the park. In the intervening years, however, my friend Carol and I have made several trips to Big Bend. We have grown to love Texas' only national park, and we feel that a prerequisite to appreciating this fascinating landscape is a basic knowledge of park facilities, combined with informed trip-planning.

Upon entering Big Bend National Park and crossing Persimmon Gap, you notice a major change compared to the 40 miles you have just covered since leaving Marathon. There are no more fences keeping you a prisoner of the roadway. It is a joy to take advantage of this and go walking out into the desert, examining plants and animal tracks or climbing among rocky cliffs. A couple of years ago, I was walking along a paved path among the giant patriarchs of Sequoia National Park, trying to block out the cacophony of human noises and achieve a sense of the special feeling John Muir had walking there alone when this was an unknown wilderness. I came upon a Park Service sign that said something like, "How does it feel to know that 10 million people have stood where you stand now and viewed this same scene?" My reverie was shattered, and I suddenly felt like I was standing in mid-Manhattan. Don't worry about that happening at Big Bend. Let down your defenses and imagine that you are the

only person who has tramped out in this direction and relished this particular piece of land in a long time. You are probably right. This beautiful Chihuahuan Desert is one of a handful of places in the United States where you can, with any degree of truth, say with Woodie Guthrie, "This land is my land."

Forty miles down the road from the entrance, you come to the first sign of human habitation. This is Panther Junction, so named, I suppose, for the resident mountain lion which was killed, taxidermied, and now stands on display at the ranger station. Take a good look at this specimen. Despite claims that mountain lions are present in the park, it is the only one you will see. Here at park headquarters, helpful rangers are on hand to answer any questions and will also issue free permits for backcountry camping and river travel. Panther Junction also includes a village, which houses park employees, a school, a small store and a gas station with the only wrecker service available in the park. Bring either a Gulf credit card or cash for buying gas in the park. There are no overnight accommodations for visitors at Panther Junction.

If you want to stay in a motel, you must drive 16 miles up into the Basin of the Chisos (chí-sos) Mountains. The units are reasonably priced but are booked up in advance every season except summer (reservations can be made by phone). One of three camping areas is in the Basin. This campground has restrooms with flush toilets, but no showers. It fills up early on holidays. The Basin has the only restaurant in the park; food is adequate and prices are commensurate with distance to both the supplier and the nearest competition. A ranger station, gas station and grocery store with some camping supplies are also here.

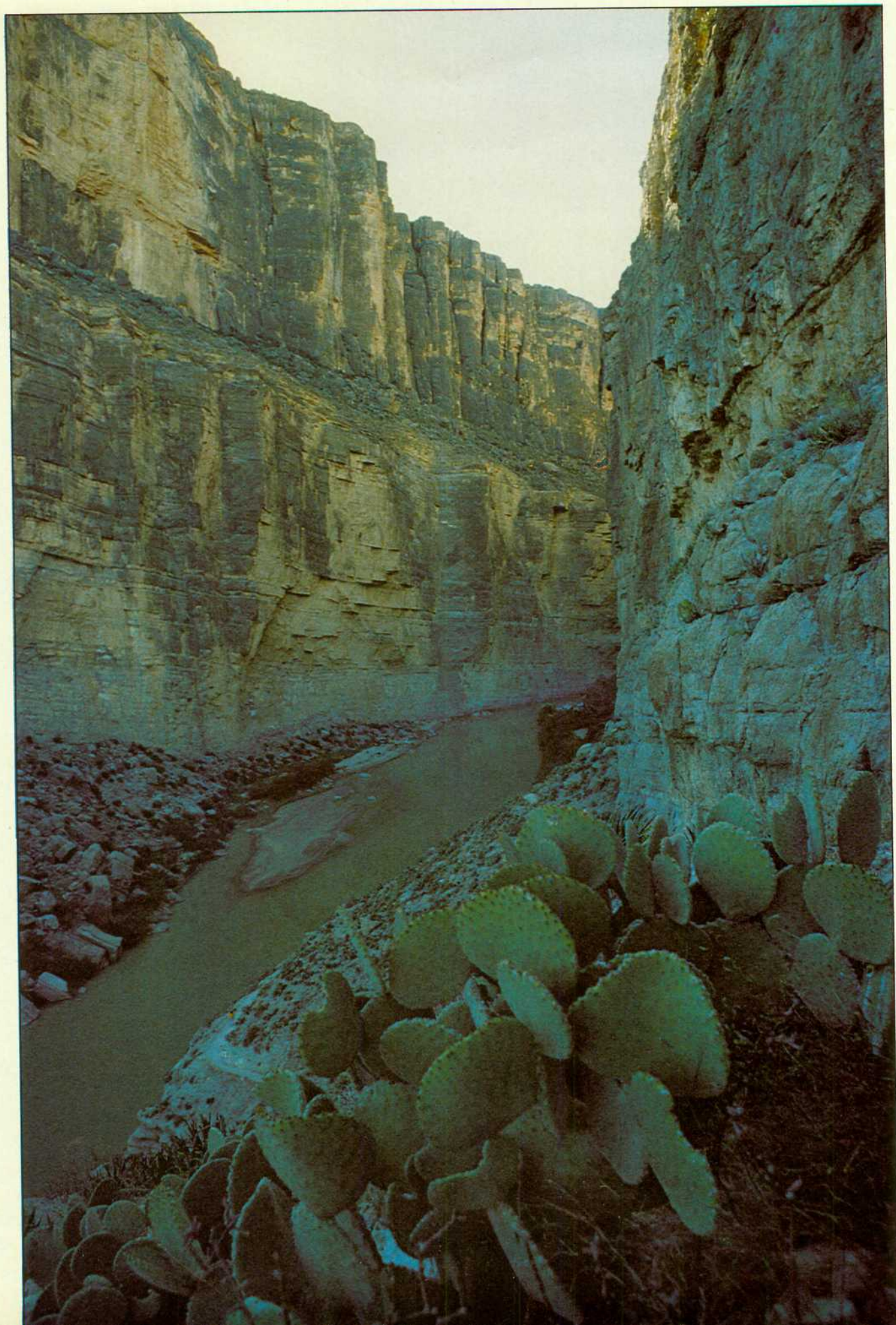
Many trails begin at the Basin; all offer hikers wonderful panoramas of the desert. Remember that no water is available on the trail, and you must carry all you need. Allow one to two gallons per day. There are saddle horses available, but think twice before using these. The damage they cause along trails and at resting sites degrades the scenic beauty and reduces the quality of wilderness experience available to hikers.

Leaving the Basin and driving 20 miles east of Panther Junction brings you to Rio Grande Village. Here are the only trailer hook-ups available in the park, as well as the only showers and laundry. A general store and gas station complete the facilities. Remember, Big Bend is one of

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*The Rio Grande flows peacefully beneath the vertical walls of Santa Elena Canyon.*







# BIG BEND

the more primitive and undeveloped national parks. In this lies much of its appeal. Maintain a flexible attitude and inconveniences will not diminish the enjoyment of your stay in the park. On our last trip to Big Bend, we came into the village after a couple of days, intent on getting cleaned up. The showers, laundry and restrooms were out of order. The predicted time of reopening was disheartening: "Maybe tomorrow." We regrouped and went on to more exploring, taking a refreshing sponge bath at a water faucet in a campground. When we returned two days later, everything was in working order again.

There are abundant campsites at Rio Grande village in the shade of large cottonwood trees. On many clear, windless nights tents are not necessary, and amateur astronomers will find the sky exceptionally clear for star-gazing with portable telescopes. The coyotes around the village seem particularly tame. We have seen them walking nonchalantly across the road at dusk within yards of the store and gas station. If you sleep out, you will certainly hear choruses of howling and yapping during the night, as family members excitedly socialize before and after solitary hunting forays.

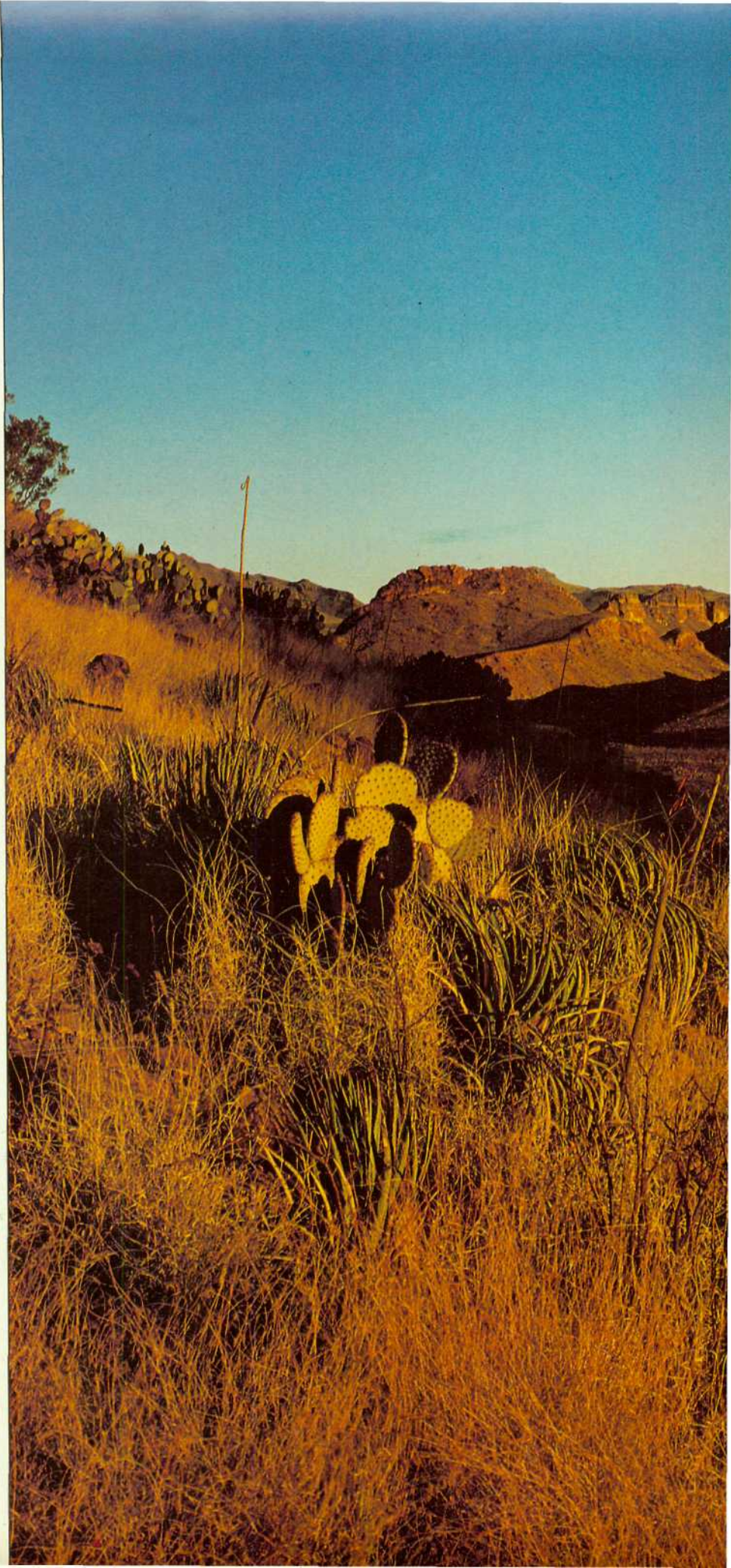
There are many hikes and drives to take from Rio Grande Village, the most popular of which is the short drive to Boquillas Canyon, where a trail leads down through tall rushes to the Rio Grande. Two miles off the road leading to Rio Grande Village is Hot Springs. Luxuriating in the 105° water is the perfect way to relax after a dusty day of hiking. Be sure to bring your bathing suit to enjoy

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**In cross-country hiking, one severs the ties to the few conveniences available in the park and becomes a temporary part of this desert ecosystem.**

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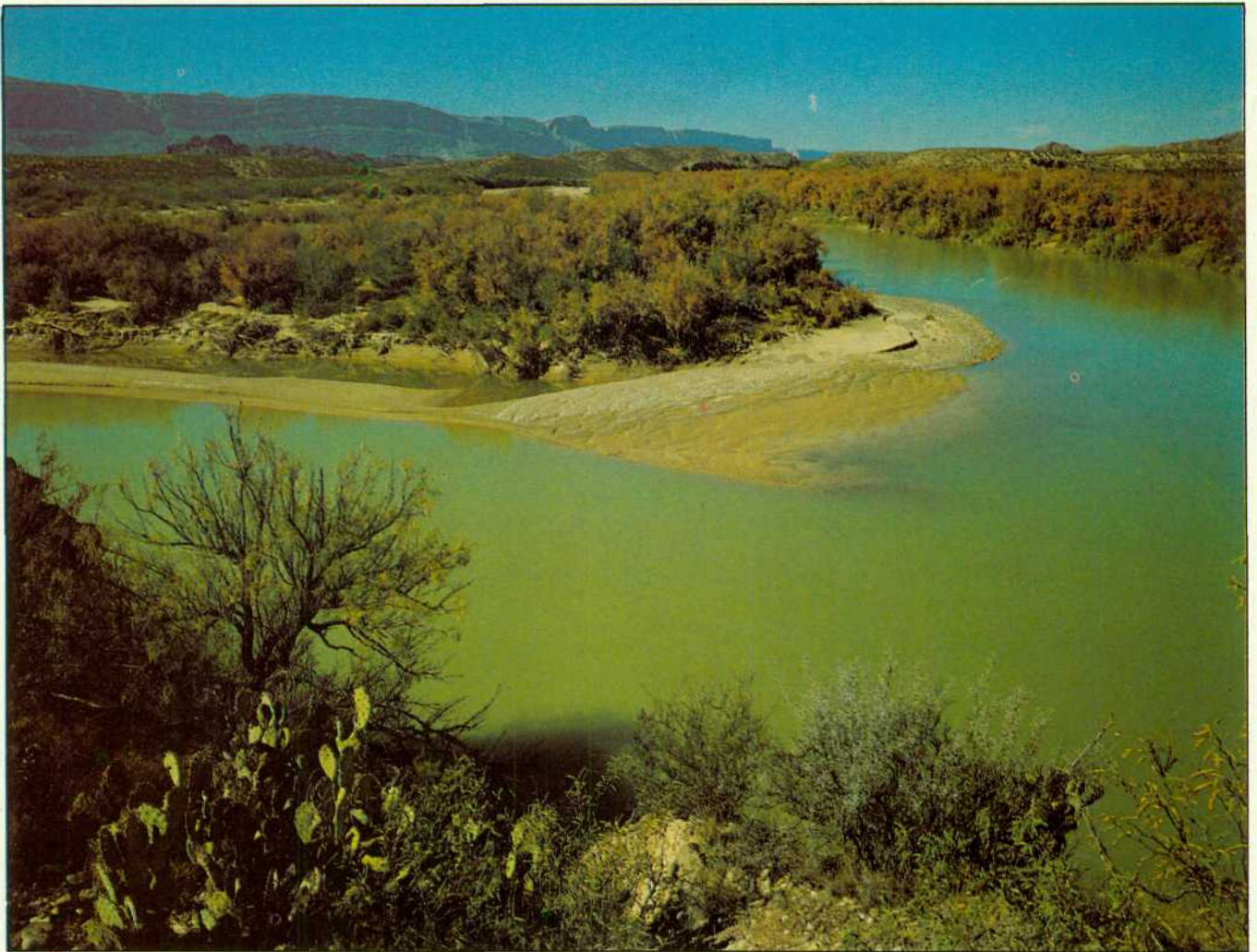
*Mule Ears Peaks, a prominent geologic formation, is visible from the road leading to Castolon.*













# BIG BEND

this natural spa.

The last of the three campgrounds is at the west end of the park near Castolon, about 65 miles from Rio Grande Village. Take your time while driving through the park (the speed limit is 45 mph). A reduced pace follows naturally from this vast expanse of timeless, peaceful desert. At Castolon, there is a frontier store with a delightfully amicable proprietor, and unleaded gas is available. This is the least developed, most beautiful and serene of the camping areas. Chemical toilets and water faucets are the only improvements. We listened to great horned owls calling to one another on our most recent visit there, spotting the nearest with the flashlight in a cottonwood only 30 yards away.

Nearby Santa Elena Canyon is a picturesque place to spend an afternoon strolling deep into the gorge or taking in a broad panorama from the rocks up above the canyon trail. There are several cool, peaceful spots to stop for a picnic under the 1,500-foot cliffs of the Sierra del Ponce Escarpment.

The paved roads take you through most of the park and hikes out from them let you explore almost every region, depending on the length of the hike and whether by trail or cross-country. In cross-country hiking, one severs the ties to the few conveniences available in the park and, as one of the self-sustaining animals living here, becomes a temporary part of this desert ecosystem. This is the best way to see the park. You are among the plants and animals and subject to the whim of weather. By living close to the earth with few man-made buffers, you get a first-hand understanding of the complex interrelations and orderliness inherent in an environment unaltered by man. A few close encounters with a wilderness area give a clear sense of the perfect adaptation of organisms evolving together in a habitat over centuries. Taking in the scope of animal life, it is impossible for me to deny a feeling of respect for them as individuals.

With regard to clothing, no matter what the weather, short pants are ill-advised. All but a few plants in this harsh environment sport thorns for protection, which efficiently prick, jab, or capture the

uninitiated hiker who brushes against them. You soon learn to meticulously avoid contact with a plant as you pass. Getting lost is no problem in the open desert; you always have a clear view of prominent landmarks. The hills between the South Rim and Punta de la Sierra, however, can be a treacherous maze and should be avoided by inexperienced backpackers. It goes without saying that no one should hike without a topographic map (page 12), compass, and other essential, protective and emergency gear.

There are many unimproved roads to special areas of the park, some of which are too remote to reach on foot. Be sure to purchase the *Road Guide to Back Country Roads* at a store or ranger station before venturing off the pavement. It gives important safety tips and explains points of interest along most of the primitive roads. It is also a good idea to ask a ranger about road conditions. Don't take motor homes down Big Bend dirt roads.


## There are no more fences keeping you a prisoner of the roadway.

River Road is the longest back-country road. It offers an opportunity to get off the beaten path and drive to seldom-seen areas of the park. Cars are able to navigate the eastern section of the road under the best conditions as far as the Talley turn-off at Mariscal Mountain. This road leads to a popular fishing spot and an entrance to the river for canoers headed through Mariscal Canyon. West of the Talley turn-off, only trucks are appropriate. One fellow we met started down the west section with some friends in a VW van and a Mustang. The VW broke down, and they had to bodily lift the rear of the Mustang to turn it around. It ran out of gas on the way out, and they had to walk to the main road. After hiking out, they were able to rescue their vehicles. Under other circumstances, such a casual foray into the back-country could have had disastrous results. It is better to use a little forethought and avoid an ordeal. In general, if it has recently rained anywhere in the vicinity, or if the weather is inclement, stay off the unpaved roads. The tricky parts of River Road are the crossings of innumerable washes. The road drops abruptly a foot or two into a bed of sand and steps out just as abruptly on the other side. A vehicle lacking adequate ground clearance can be damaged or become suspended by the rear bumper.

There is also the danger of becoming mired in the sand. One ranger told us that three cars a day on the west portion of the River Road constitutes a busy day. Between holidays, the road is infrequently travelled. Stranded motorists have to depend for rescue on getting the attention of an occasional Border Patrol plane passing overhead.

With a capable truck and perfect weather conditions, River Road can offer a special view of the park. It is 51 miles from the start near Rio Grande Village to its terminus near Castolon. Side roads on the eastern section go to historic Glenn Springs, where drinking water is available (no swimming) and to other remote places, mainly used for fishing or canoe-launching. We recently made the trip from west to east in seven hours and had to pass up some attractive stopping places to get to Rio Grande Village before dark. Start early and allow nine to 10 hours, or, better yet, obtain a camping permit and spend a couple of days exploring the many scenic and historic sites along the road. There are picturesque dikes for those interested in geology. (A dike is a narrow rock wall formed when molten lava pushed up through a crack in surrounding strata, solidified and remained after the original rock weathered away.) Black Dike is peculiar in that it extends out into the Rio Grande, forming a dam around which the river jogs before continuing on its course. Also along River Road are the historic ruins of a ranch and an abandoned mercury mine.

Chief park naturalist Robert Huggins advises visitors to write ahead to the park for brochures or other information that might help them pre-plan their trip. Once in the park, the traveler should adopt a slower pace, spending as much time as possible out of the car in order to explore the desert first hand.

We hope that these tips will help you to see Big Bend National Park as we do: an inexhaustible source of renewal, peace and perspective not available in an urban environment. 



(Above) A picturesque bend in the Rio Grande, about 15 miles from the west end of the River Road.

(Left) Profound stillness prevails as the Rio Grande flows out of Santa Elena Canyon.



# The California Grizzly Bear

Text and photography by Karen Sausman

## The grizzly was honored with dances and rituals.

*Willie, the hairy monster, doesn't seem all that frightening when someone else is in charge.*

**T**HE YOUNG bear fidgeted at the end of his leash, straining to get a good look at the 800-pound adult grizzly being led toward us for the next scene of the movie. He was not sure he wanted to be anywhere near such a huge animal. The script described the scene: a young grizzly bear was to race across the mountain meadow, chasing a ground squirrel, while his mother loped after him. The "actors," both tame, were Willie, a four-year-old male, and Pooh, a six-month-old male—not mother and son at all, but then, that's Hollywood. The cameraman explained that if I ran across the meadow calling to Pooh he would certainly follow, while Willie, who was anxious to play with the young bear, would come after both of us. It seemed simple. It was only after we started the scene that I realized the real consequences of the chase, but the cameras were rolling!

Across the meadow I went, being chased all right, just as the script called for, except that Pooh was terrified of the hairy monster galloping after him and was running to me, his friend and protector, for

help. Dancing in my head were visions of Karen fending off the playful swipes of an 800-pound grizzly bear, while a frightened youngster growled and fought back, using me as a shield. In the midst of all of this, I kept hearing the cameraman yelling "go faster, go faster, you're getting in the frame." He needn't have bothered. Fortunately, as we passed the second cameraman, the young bear took refuge in the legs of the tall tripod. The cameraman suddenly found himself having to defend not only himself but his precious equipment. Moments later, the bears' handler arrived to lead the big male away, leaving us to untangle Pooh from \$2,000 worth of camera equipment. In the background I heard the head cameraman say, "We might try it again." Fat chance!

Grizzly bears are the largest carnivores in North America. At one time, these massive animals could be found roving and foraging for food from Kansas to California, from Alaska and northern Canada south to Colorado and even into the mountains of northern Mexico. While there is wide variation in body size, facial





features and coloration, scientists agree that all of the grizzly or brown bears in North America belong to one highly variable species: *Ursus arctos*. The various differences in size and color indicate different sub-species.

Like most of our large native animals, grizzly bears are slowly but surely disappearing from the areas of their ancestral range. Although it is on the California State flag, the last native grizzly bear in the state was probably killed at Horse Corral Meadows, in the mountains of Tulare County, in 1922.

Until the coming of the Europeans, the grizzly bear was master of all he surveyed. He feared neither man nor beast. The imposing hulk of a threatening bear standing 10 feet tall was enough to rout anything that might challenge him, except perhaps another bear. The Indians who lived in California treated him with great respect and fear. The Indians were so intimidated that areas which were abundantly populated with bears were left strictly alone. Many early tribes never attempted to hunt or trap them; in others, the grizzly was honored with dances and rituals and there were bear doctors and shamans who were said to have some of the special powers and ferocity of their namesakes.

When the Spaniards came to California at the end of the 16th Century, they found literally hundreds of bears. The bears quickly became nuisances around the settlements, destroying livestock and challenging their new human neighbors.

Spaniards were perhaps the first to attempt to rope bears from horseback and bring them back into the compounds alive. An article in the San Francisco *Daily Alta California* of March 7, 1875 tells of lassoing a grizzly bear:

*The bear began sparring warily . . . but Pacheco's lasso shot like an arrow, and clasped about the huge fore-foot, when the horse (who saw every movement, and was just as wide-awake as Pacheco) sprang the other way, and the lasso being fast to the pommel, the bear was instantly thrown to the ground, when two other men, quick as lightning, had thrown their lassos, and caught the hindfeet; then another rider caught the loose fore-foot, and the four horses took their positions like cavalry animals trained by some noiseless signal, and slowly marched down the mountain's side, two horses in the van and two in the rear, dragging *Ursa Major* quietly down the grassy descent, the rear horses keeping just taut-line to prevent the bear from getting any use of his terrible hind claws.*

Many of these bears were subsequently

used in bear and bull fights, where large bulls were pitted against grizzly bears in specially built arenas. Bear and bull fights were probably staged in all of the settlements of Southern California.

Despite all the hunting that the Spaniards did, the bear population was still able to hold its own throughout most of the state. It was not until Americans and Europeans started coming to California in the 1800s that the big bears faced an adversary they could not cope with. Their depredations on livestock, damage to property and threatening of human life around the settlements made the bears public enemy number one. Professionals were hired to hunt and kill them. Many were shot purely for sport, as the bear was considered big game. Men from the East came to test themselves against the power, speed and cunning of the wild California grizzly.

Not all of the men that were fascinated with the grizzly bear wanted to shoot him. One such man was James Capon Adams. Born in Massachusetts, Adams arrived in California in the summer of 1849. Although he was involved in mining and raising livestock, he also enjoyed working with wild animals. In 1852, he established a camp in Yosemite in the Sierra Nevada to hunt and trap. He collected pelts and trapped live animals such as bear, mountain lion, deer, fox and bobcat. It was his ability to work with and train grizzly bears that earned him the name of "Grizzly Adams." T. H. Hittell, a journalist, was so fascinated with Adams that in 1860 he wrote a book (which was re-issued in 1911) titled, *The Adventures of James Capon*

## There were bear doctors and shamans who were said to have some of the special powers and ferocity of their namesakes.

*Karen Sausman resting with Pooh, both relieved that the chase is over.*



DES BARTLETT



# Grizzlies

**Weighing up to 1,000 pounds, the paws of the giants are 13 inches long by seven inches wide, tipped with four claws more than four inches in length.**

*This furry grizzly cub, cute enough to cuddle, may weigh as much as 1,000 pounds when grown.*

*Adams, Mountaineer and Grizzly Bear Hunter of California.* Hittell described how Adams trained his bears not only to carry packs and go everywhere with him but also to ride in wagons. Hittell became Adams' public relations man and press agent, spreading the tales that still, more than 100 years later, excite our imaginations and respect. Adams took his collection of wild animals to San Francisco and became a showman. He featured three bears — Sampson, Lady Washington and her cub, Benjamin Franklin — as well as elk, lion, tiger, panther, deer and numerous small animals. The bears were apparently under perfect control and would do a series of simple tricks. Adams moved his menagerie to a facility then called the Pacific Museum, where he stayed from 1857-1860, and then on to New York, where he contacted P. T. Barnum and prepared to work with him. But, working with big animals such as bears is dangerous and rough. Adams had been injured many times by his charges, as well as by the wild creatures which he hunted. A few months after arriving in New York, he died of his many wounds and sheer exhaustion.

While there are no longer grizzly bears in California (they are also extinct in Oregon and all but a small portion in northern Washington), they exist today in

Alaska and Arctic Canada, as well as in parts of Montana and Colorado, still inspiring in man the same fear and awe that the Indians understood well. Adult grizzly bears are large, powerful animals, weighing between 400 and 1,000 pounds, measuring up to 3 1/2 feet across at the shoulder. Their paws may be more than 13 inches long by seven inches wide and are tipped with four claws, more than four inches in length. The common name grizzly comes from the fact that their outer or guard hairs are silver tipped, giving them a grizzled appearance. One feature that sets grizzlies apart from all other bears but brown bears is the shoulder hump, which results from the size and placement of a muscle mass above the shoulder blades.

Grizzly bears are omnivorous—opportunists that will eat anything and everything. While they will take livestock, they normally eat rodents, fish, small game and even carrion. They also enjoy feasting on berries, bulbs, acorns and clover. It is not unusual to find bears literally grazing in a pasture of fresh spring clover when it is at its sweetest.

Grizzly bears are loners, males and females living a more or less solitary existence and coming together occasionally to breed and to feed wherever there is an abundance of food. The breeding season is mid-summer. The cubs are born during deep winter in a den while the female is hibernating. Dens may be anything from a cave or a rock crevice to a hole under a large downed tree or a pile of brush. The young, usually two or three, are naked and weigh about 12 ounces at birth. The cubs spend the better part of their first two years with their mother. While the adults seldom climb, the cubs frequently do. They are sent up trees whenever there is danger and they also forage in the trees. Once the female is bred again, the cubs are left to fend for themselves. They mature by the time they are eight or 10 years old, and live up to 30 years.

The grizzly has been the official symbol of California since 1846. It is sad that the only ones now living here are in zoological gardens and are the offspring of grizzlies brought in from out of the state. There are areas within the state of California that could easily support the populations of grizzly bears. However, it is not likely they will be reintroduced into the state: their size and disposition make them potentially dangerous to man and livestock. So, Californians must enjoy the grizzly bears through experiences with them in other areas of North America or through the antics of Willie and Pooh as they cavort and tell their stories to thousands of viewers of televised wildlife programs. **2**





# THE SERI INDIANS: Keeping Their Culture Alive

by William Adams

**T**HROUGHOUT the southwestern United States—at Indian trading posts and in museum gift shops—one can occasionally find small collections or individual carvings of ironwood, exquisitely done by the Seri Indians of Sonora, a state in northern Mexico.



TOM THREINEN





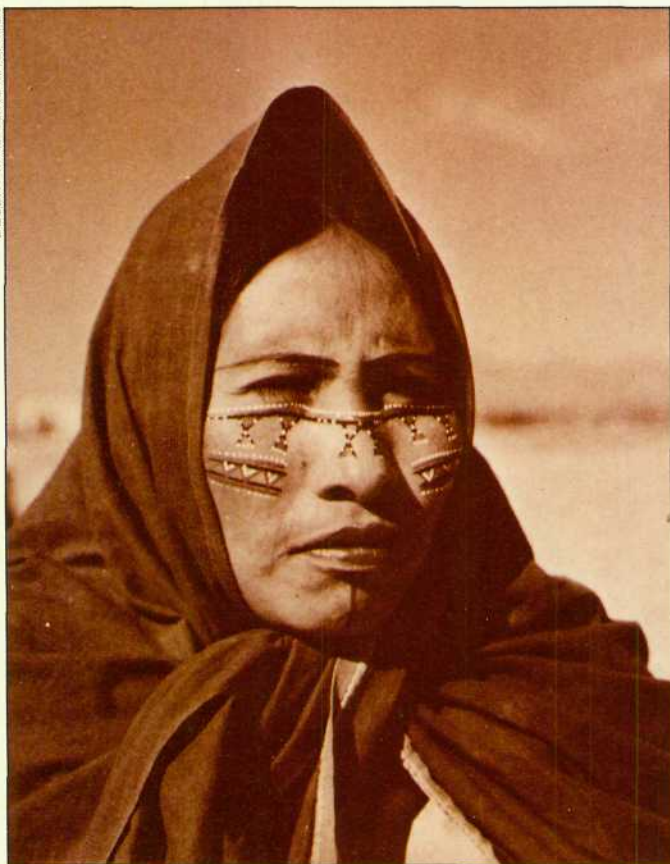
# THE SERI INDIANS

With ageless simplicity of design, these carvings usually represent sea creatures from the Sea of Cortez (Gulf of California): whales, dolphins, sharks, sailfish, manta rays, sea lions, pelicans and giant turtles. There are also figures of quail, lizards, snakes, scorpions and bighorn sheep from the great Sonoran desert. Each of these sculptures of finely grained, weathered ironwood is a one-of-a-kind collector's item. They are expensive. A few find their way into museum collections.

This is not an ancient or historical Seri art, but one developed in the tribe's well-defined pattern of adaptation for survival. From the earliest times, the Seris have carved utilitarian objects from mesquite and green ironwood, which, next to Florida's leadwood, is the heaviest wood native to North America. Harpoons, yokes, oars, musical rasps, bean pounders, spear points, clubs for killing fish and game—all were carved from this hard, heavy wood.

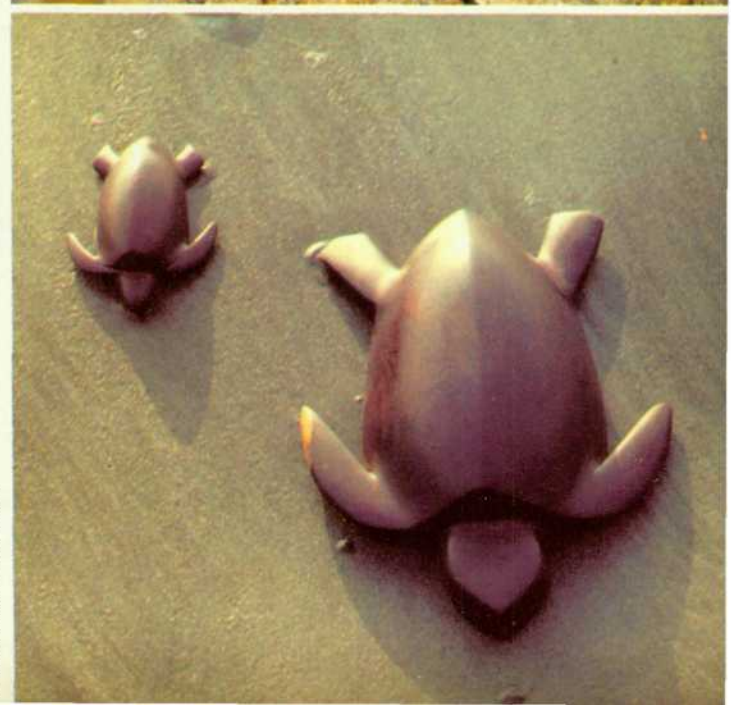
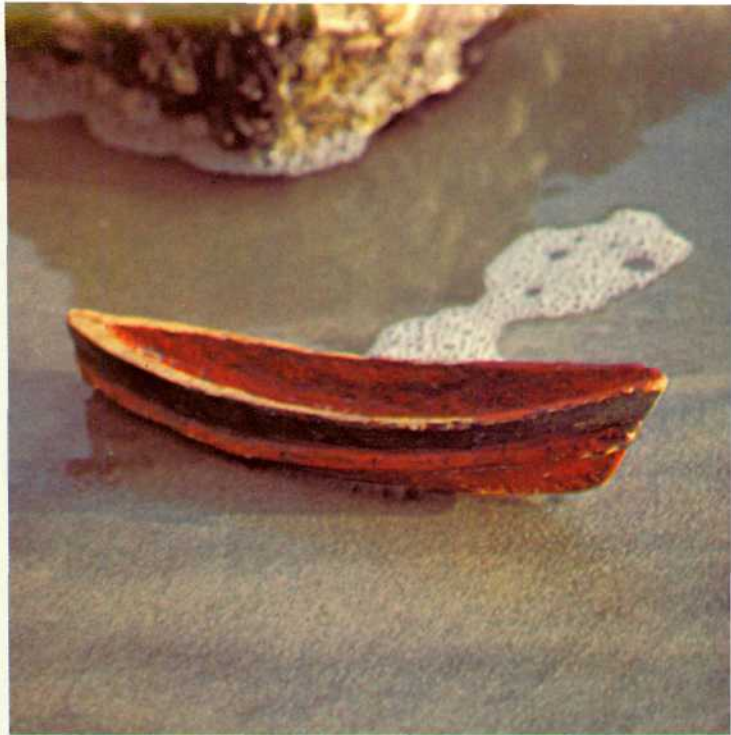
In 1961, Alexander Russell, Jr. of Tucson, a frequent visitor to the Seris, was presented with a block of polished ironwood carved by José Astorga. José said, "It's something to hold your papers down." Encouraged by Russell and equipped with better tools, Astorga was the first Seri to begin carving "things that swim."

DESERT MAGAZINE ARCHIVES



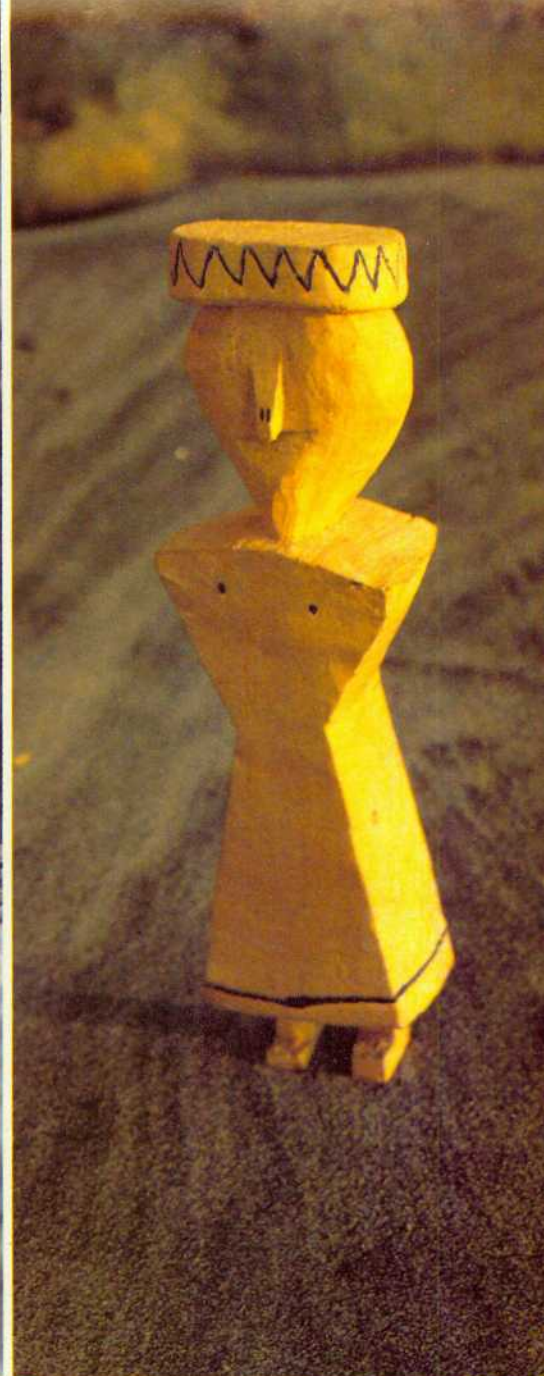
*Bo'otse, with an elaborately painted face.*

**The Seris have staged a remarkable resurgence through their ability to adapt to changing economic and physical conditions.**



PHOTOS: PAYNE JOHNSON







# THE SERIS

Today, practically the entire Seri tribe—men, women and children—works on such carvings. Early carvings were crude, darkened by rubbing with old motor oil. Carvings are now finished like modern Danish furniture so the beautiful natural grain of the wood can be seen. In one carving of a quail, for example, the shaping incorporates the wood grain in the bird's feathers.

Who are the Seri Indians?

Here's how the National Geographic described them in 1919:

*This tribe has never been tamed, 'uplifted' or exhibited. Yet it is older, perhaps, than the Aztecs; it may even be the last living fragment of the American aborigines. The Seris, these strange people are called, and they inhabit a lonely, evil rock called Tiburón (Shark) Island that lifts its hostile head from the hot, empty waters of the Gulf of Cortez.*

*Their poverty and degradation are perhaps the most absolute among human beings anywhere. No house-keeping, no gardens, no animals, no fowl to care for, no tools, no utensils save clay ollas. They just fish, run down deer (which they eat raw) or spear a turtle.*

On the verge of extinction at the turn of the 20th Century, their numbers down to 100 or so, the Seris have staged a remarkable resurgence through their ability to adapt to changing economic and physical conditions.

The first Europeans to lay eyes on the Seris was Cabeza de Vaca, during his great transcontinental journey in 1539. At that time the tribe, estimated to number some

*These Seri women are digging clams, a staple in the Seri diet.*

5,000 strong, occupied an area of what is now Mexico's state of Sonora, stretching from Guaymas Bay to about 75 miles north of Tiburón Island and inland almost to Hermosillo. Tiburón Island was the heartland of the Seris. During the 1930s, nearly all of them lived on this "evil rock." The largest island in the Sea of Cortez, Tiburón is 30 miles long, 20 miles wide and covers about 500 square miles. Two mountain ridges, the Sierra Kunkaak and Sierra Ménor, have a valley between them and run the length of the island. Bighorn sheep roam peaks as high as 3,995 feet, and there are mule and white-tailed deer, coyotes, rabbits, quail and other small game. Far from being empty, the surrounding cool waters are alive with an abundance of fish and sea life seldom found elsewhere in the world.

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**This tribe is older, perhaps, than the Aztecs; the last living fragment of the American aborigines.**

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Southwest of Tiburón lies San Esteban Island and beyond that, San Lorenzo. This is the midriff, or narrowest, part of the Sea of Cortez. The open-water distance between Baja California and the mainland of Mexico never exceeds 150 miles. This is a difficult but not impossible gap to cross on the kind of balsa rafts once used by the Seris: they have always been skillful seamen with inherent knowledge of currents and winds.

The Seris speak a Hokan or Hokaltec language, which is related to the Yuman language of the inhabitants of the Colorado River and Baja California. The sewn coils of their baskets spiral outward from

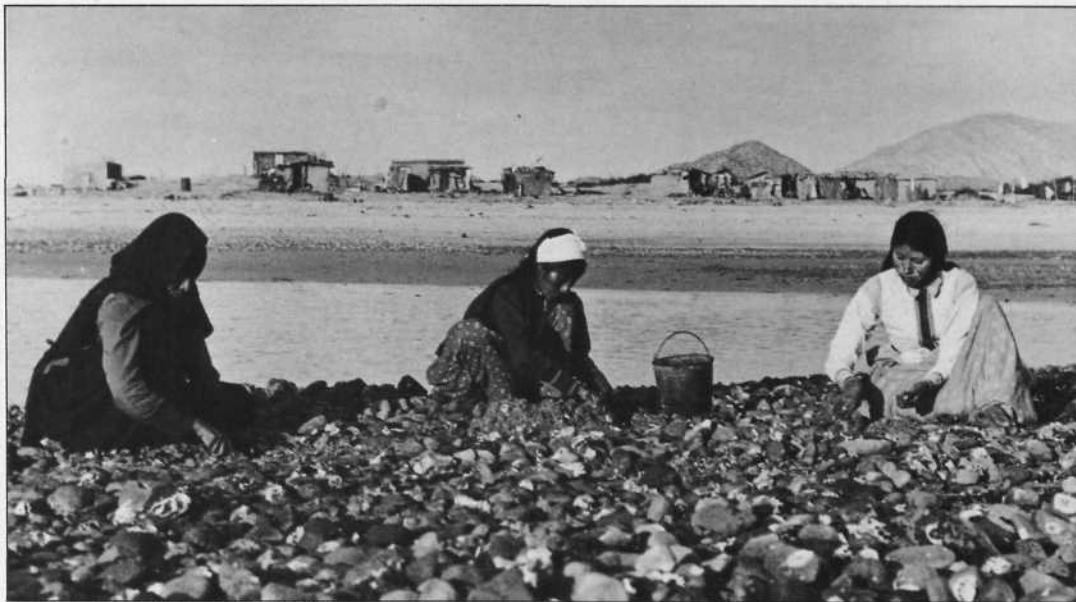
the center in the clockwise direction of the California Indians, unlike the counter-clockwise coils used by other Indians of the Southwestern United States. Unlike all other Mexican Indians, the Seris have never had any use for corn; nor did they eat coyotes or dogs. This evidence suggests that the Seris may constitute a surviving remnant of one of those very early waves of migration which swept out of Asia, across the Bering Straits, and down the west coast of North America more than 10,000 years ago.

What is certain is that the Seris remain to this day probably the most primitive Indian tribe in North America. Only within the last few years has this proud, fierce people accepted any modern ways.

Tiburón is separated from the mainland of Sonora by a mile-wide strait called Boca del Infiernillo (Mouth of Little Hell). The mainland here is called the Desierto Encinas—a vast expanse of desert sand and naked brown mountain rocks with about two inches of rainfall annually. Permanent water is found only in a few places. Temperatures of more than 100 degrees are normal in summer. In winter, the dreaded Norte, a cold, damp wind, may blow for a week at a time, causing intense discomfort. Until recently, Seri men and women made daily trips from the coast to fetch water in large clay ollas carried on the head or hung from yokes.

In large measure, the preservation of Seri culture and even the tribe itself stems from the worthlessness of this land to both the Spaniards and the Mexicans.

When the Spaniards came, the Seris lived in settlements along the coast as well as on Tiburón and San Esteban. Because they had no agriculture and because of the uncertainty of water, theirs was a nomadic culture based on fishing, hunting and gathering. They lived in simple *ramadas*



DESERT MAGAZINE ARCHIVES



(arbors) of ocotillo poles stuck in the sand and covered with brush, animal or pelican skins. Later they would build wattle-and-daub huts supported by mesquite corners and walls.

For the most part a handsome people, the Seris are among the tallest and darkest of all Indians. The women have a beautiful carriage; the men are slender but wiry and capable of great surges of energy. The Seris are swift runners and, in early times, were fierce fighters. They used bows as tall as their chins with poisoned, iron-pointed arrows and fought viciously in hand-to-hand combat.

Oriented to the sea from which they drew most of their sustenance, the Seris were never comfortable inland. Their principal gods were the green sea turtle and the pelican, although nothing in their religion prevented them from eating these gods.

As they often had fought bitterly with their neighboring Indian tribes such as the Papagos, Pimas and Yaquis, the Seris began hostilities with the Spanish as early as 1541 when Coronado, then at Rio Grande, sent Don Pedro de Tovar to Corazones to punish the tribe for a massacre. Don Pedro fled, leaving 17 soldiers dying in agony from poisoned arrow wounds.

In the latter part of the 16th and 17th Centuries, Jesuit missions were established in northern Mexico to reduce the Indian tribes. It is said that 1,000 Seris came to the missions and did their best to farm. Just as they were achieving some success, Spanish soldiers moved in, grabbed the best land, and hustled all the women of the Seri colonists off to slavery in Guatemala. In the following years, a bitter struggle was carried on between bands of Seris and Spanish and Mexican soldiers.

Eventually, the few hundred Seris who were left were forced to abandon their coastal villages and retreat to their last stronghold—Tiburón Island. For decades they came to the mainland only to hunt, gather desert foods, fiber and extra water.

During the 1930s, the Seris gradually began returning to the Sonoran coast. They established colonies which remain today at Desemboque, Punta Chuca, Punta Libertad and other coastal locations. Here on this harsh shore, with the sea on one side and the desert on the other, they have largely continued their primitive cultural life—belonging to no one and not wanting to.

**T**HEIR FIRST step in adapting for survival under modern conditions occurred in the early 1930s, when some of the Seris began working with non-Indians at Kino Bay in a fishing cooperative. Today they fish from wooden

boats with outboard motors supplied by the government or wholesalers, who pack their catch in ice and move it to markets in Mexico or the United States.

Gathering, always a basic part of Seri life, is reflected in the array of lovely baskets created by Seri women. Intriguing designs are woven into these baskets made of the shrubs *torote* and *paloblanco* by using strands of the *torote* that have been dyed a rich burnt sienna color. Unfortunately, few baskets are being made today, and these are usually made on order for museums and collectors.

In prehistoric and later times, the Seris made pottery known as “eggshell” because it is thin yet fine, hard and strong. Ancient *ollas* of eggshell are sometimes found in caves. The *olla*, formerly used to transport water and food for storage, was the Seri’s

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### **Any event is an excuse for a Seri fiesta with singing, music and dancing to drums, rasps and Seri-made one-string fiddles.**

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most important utensil. In sharp contrast to eggshell, recent Seri pottery has been dung-tempered ware—heavy, coarse and crudely wrought.

Many curious small ceramic figurines have been discovered by archaeologists in shell middens along the Seri coast. Fine-grained and fire-hard, they are usually in human form and are thought to have been fetishes, fertility figures, religious offerings or, perhaps, simply dolls for children.

The Seris have long made and worn a variety of beads. A body in an ancient grave was accompanied by a necklace of 6,300 shell beads. Bead chains are fashioned from shells, bird, fish and rattlesnake vertebra, clay, seeds, dried flower blossoms and bits of wood and reed. These are readily available in curio shops.

Seri women wear long, full skirts with blouses and a shawl over the head. Men usually wear pants, shirts and a jacket. All go barefoot. On special occasions today, as in the past, both sexes paint their faces with delicate, distinctive lines and flower symbols.

Almost any event is an excuse for Seri fiesta with singing, music and dancing to drums, rasps and Seri-made one-string fiddles.

In the 1920s, the Seris made another significant adaptation. When the world market for vitamins boomed, the Seris learned how to build wooden boats to replace their balsa rafts in order to fish for sharks in quantity. Shark livers were in

great demand.

In 1965, the Mexican government took over Tiburón Island as a game preserve. All Seris were moved off and naval marines were stationed there to prevent poaching and, since there is a small landing strip, narcotics traffic. The Seris were forbidden to visit the island to exercise their aboriginal hunting and fishing rights.

In a marked reversal, the government passed an act in April, 1977, returning the island to the Seris under certain conditions. Only they may visit the island. They can fish, camp without restriction and gather plants, seeds and firewood, but they may not hunt. Thus the island will remain a sanctuary for fauna, and new species will be introduced for possible propagation.

Seri culture has been subjected to many outside influences during the last quarter century. Missionary sects have tried to substitute hymns for the old Seri songs, banned dancing, smoking, cactus wine and face painting. The Mexican National Indian Institute has built cement block houses with three bedrooms, baths and electricity. Stores offer canned goods, patent medicines, polyester blouses and shirts, radios and other trappings of advanced civilization.

Yet, a recent letter from Becky Moser who, with her husband Ed, lived with the Seris for more than 20 years, studying their culture and translating the Seri language, tells us that the Seris cling stubbornly to their old ways. For instance, the Seri language is spoken almost exclusively in the home. Spanish is known but used only in conducting business. Fiestas are still held in the traditional manner and there is fishing and gathering in the desert. Seris wander up and down the coast, often continuing to live in primitive *ramadas* on the beach.

With increasing income, largely from their carvings, and a new willingness to cooperate and meet with those around them, the Seri population has nearly tripled in recent years. In May of 1977, a population count listed 201 men, 250 women and 258 children—all of whom speak Seri.

Like all small minorities, the Seris are vulnerable to the economic, governmental and religious encroachments of those who impinge on their territory. It will be increasingly difficult for Seri youth to resist rock music, automobiles and motor bikes, the impact of radio, TV and the written word.

Can the Seris continue as a distinct culture while coming into increasing contact with people seeking to buy the wood carvings and other handiwork of this amazing band of Indians?

Only time will tell. **Z**



# A Man and a Mine

*One was chosen to lead California into the 20th Century; the other paid off more than \$1.5 million in gold*

**Text and Photos  
by Tom McGrath**



ON THE FACE of one of the rolling hills that loom up alongside Highway 14 as you travel between Newhall and Palmdale is an outcropping of gray rock. It marks the spot of the old Governor Mine, once one of Los Angeles County's most productive gold mines. The dark gray tailings can be seen from far away, but the headframe that once dominated the site is missing.

The desert has a way of reclaiming her land, and subtle signs that man's influence is in retreat are everywhere. A lone sentry, the last standing fencepost still holds onto three strands of barbed wire. It has become surrounded by the green branches of a mesquite tree. The main mine shaft is covered over, and a secondary shaft, higher on the hillside, is crisscrossed with heavy planks and surrounded by wire fencing. A cement foundation crumbles in the direct rays of the noontime sun. Nearby, small pieces of ironwork corrode in the sunlight as the desert takes back her own in slow, quiet steps. Sometimes the wind lightly stirs the grass, but the scene stands still, illuminated by the desert sun.

The scene was far different in the 1880s. Mining noises filled the air and the nearby town of Acton was alive with boomtown excitement. In the decade of the 1880s alone, miners took more than \$100,000 in gold from this spot. Eventually the main

shaft would extend 1,000 feet down, with four levels of tunnels reaching out laterally.

This mine was to become the largest producer of gold ore in the history of Los Angeles County, but its notoriety would not end there. One of the mine's principal owners would become governor of California. Mining and politics are risky businesses; both the gold vein and Henry

**Gage began his term with a bold offensive that some feared was too ambitious.**

T. Gage's popularity would eventually play out—but not before giving each a spot in California's history.

The story of the mine begins with the close of construction of the railroad. Some of the men formerly employed in railroad construction began prospecting and finding gold here in the 1870s and 1880s. It was known in the early days as the New York Mine, and Acton was known as Soledad City. In 1875, the Southern

Pacific Railroad decided the town name conflicted with Soledad in Central California and renamed its train station Acton, for a village in Massachusetts. The town took the cue and began calling itself Acton.

Little care was taken in those early days to record events. There remains little history of that era. What is known is that Henry T. Gage, attorney and businessman, acquired ownership in the mine about 1895. By that time, the New York Mine was producing large amounts of high-grade gold ore. The mine continued producing gold at a good clip until about 1897, when the vein was lost. The mine was closed as unprofitable, leaving Henry Gage the opportunity to explore other interests.

Gage's immersion in politics began with his election to the post of Los Angeles City Attorney in 1881. He had also been elected a delegate to the Republican National Convention in 1888, when he took the podium to second the nomination of Levi P. Morton for the vice presidency.

Gage was described by a contemporary as "above medium height, strong and compactly built and with a face indicating great determination and character."

It may have been Gage's governor-like appearance, more than his political talent, that made his party nominate him for the high office. Nevertheless, the closing of



all of said claims. And we do  
and make for the benefit of each and  
all thereof.

That affiant is a male citizen  
of the United States over the age of twenty-one  
years, and makes this affidavit on  
behalf of the owner of said mining  
claims.

Subscribed and sworn to  
before me this 14 day of January 1909

Henry J. Gage.

Fred. G. Mansfield  
Notary Public in and for the  
County of Los Angeles, State of California



Henry J. Gage  
Jan 15th 1909  
8 P.M.

L. B. Ray him

One of the many entries recorded on the record books of the Cedar Mining District around the turn of the century. This 1909 entry shows a transaction involving one of the former governor's many mining claims near the present city of Acton, California.

the mine corresponded with the upcoming election campaign; in late 1897, candidates were beginning to toss their hats into the ring for an election not to be held until late the following year.

After a spirited election campaign, Gage took office January 5, 1899, in a ceremony complete with cannon salute and a band

playing *Hail to the Chief*. From the start, Gage took a stern position against government bureaucracy, deficit spending and lobbyists. Gage began his term with a bold offensive that some feared was too ambitious.

An immediate problem of Governor Gage's administration was his involvement in the contest for United States senator. Gage supported a candidate unfavored by several powerful newspaper publishers of the era. A bitter fight followed when Senator Stephen White retired in early 1899. The fight resulted in a 104-ballot deadlock in the state legislature, and a cloud was cast over the

Gage administration at the outset of his term. The *San Francisco Call* and the *Los Angeles Times* attacked Gage for his actions in the senatorial campaign, and a split developed between Gage and the newspapers. The Gage administration was blamed for California having only one U.S. senator.

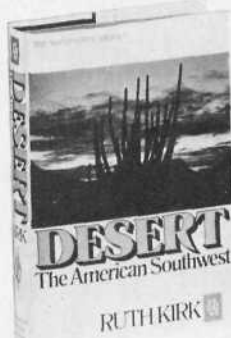
In the aftermath of the senatorial fight, the legislature passed and Gage signed two anti-newspaper bills, designed to slow down the newspaper attack. The opposition became more intense. It was more than a year later that the legislature finally elected a senator, but Gage's candidate was defeated.



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## Governor Mine

A month after the senatorial election, a  
plague broke out in San Francisco's  
Chinatown. Although federal officials  
wanted to declare emergency sanitary  
measures, Gage joined with local mer-  
chant interests in announcing that the  
plague reports were false. Gage appealed  
to President McKinley to reverse a  
quarantine order placed on the area by  
federal health officials. McKinley did.  
The following year a federal investigation  
confirmed that there was a plague  
epidemic in San Francisco's Chinatown:  
Gage finally sent state aid and Chinatown  
was cleaned up. Gage, however, suffered a  
serious political setback in what became  
known as the plague incident.

The plague was only the beginning of  
Gage's troubles. There occurred a major  
labor dispute in San Francisco, in which  
Gage succeeded in alienating both sides.  
However, he showed a great deal of  
restraint in not calling out the militia when  
there was a great outcry for him to do so.  
Instead, he became the first California  
governor to mediate a large labor problem,  
and the situation was brought to a peaceful  
end.

Other problems beset the beleaguered  
Gage administration. Some major news-  
paper wrote that Gage had accepted fur-  
niture that had been made with prison  
labor. Gage disagreed, and swore out an  
arrest warrant for John D. Spreckles and  
W. S. Leake of the *San Francisco Call*  
newspaper. Not to be outdone, Spreckles  
and Leake said Gage had committed  
criminal libel against them, and persuaded  
a judge to issue a bench warrant for the  
arrest of Governor Gage.

Gage had alienated so many interests by  
the end of his four-year term that his re-  
election chances looked very slim. Still, the  
newspaper for Acton's declining popula-  
tion, the *Acton Rooster*, proclaimed: "If the  
Republican Party ever turns Governor  
Gage down—but we don't think it will—a  
club would hang over every future gover-  
nor . . . to do the bidding of these  
millionaire newspaper bosses or be  
blackmailed or prosecuted, as they are at-  
tempting to do . . . now to the . . . best  
governor California ever had."

Despite the last-ditch support of the *Ac-  
ton Rooster* and others, the Republican  
Party turned Governor Gage down. His  
single term ended, he returned to Los  
Angeles, where he reinstituted his law  
practice. In 1909, President Taft ap-  
pointed him to a diplomatic post in Por-  
tugal, which he resigned due to his wife's  
ill health two years later. He died in Los  
Angeles in 1924.

**E**IGHT YEARS later, Gage's son  
reopened the old New York mine,  
renaming it the Governor Mine in  
his father's honor. The venture paid off  
when a vein was discovered, this time on  
the 400-foot level. Ore began returning  
\$40 per ton, with mining costs averaging  
about \$4.50 per ton.

Ore was crushed at the mine and then  
trucked several miles to the mill in the city  
of Acton. This mill had reached a capacity  
of 60 tons a day by 1937. By 1940, it was  
handling 140 tons of ore every 24 hours.  
(Of course, ore from other local mines,  
such as the Red Rover and Puritan, was  
also treated at this mill.) Recovery of 94  
percent was achieved.

The vein finally played out and the mine  
was closed in 1942. Its machinery was  
dismantled and sold at auction in 1950.

**Small pieces of  
ironwork corrode in  
the sunlight as the  
desert takes back  
her own in slow  
quiet steps.**

That brought to a close another chapter in  
the history of the abandoned mine in the  
hillside above Acton; a mine named for a  
man chosen to lead California into the  
20th Century, and an investment that paid  
off more than \$1.5 million in gold.

That, however, is not the end of the  
story.

The same year the mill was auctioned,  
Jack and Marie Milburn moved from Los  
Angeles to Acton. They bought a little  
house with two large plate glass windows  
in front. Their house had been a store that  
was headquarters for the official recorder  
for the Cedar Mining District around the  
turn of the century. This was a nice bit of  
house history, but they did not think too  
much about it until one day it began rain-  
ing, fast and furious.

Those were the days before the Mil-  
burns put on the new roof. "The old one  
was so full of holes," Jack Milburn later  
confided, "that on a clear day you could  
see the whole valley from inside the attic."  
He explained that when the rain began at a  
slow pace, the shingles would expand and  
fill in the many gaps. If it began with a  
downpour, look out.

When he heard a sudden steady rain  
several years ago, Milburn went right up  
to the attic. He grabbed a couple of leak-  
pans and was positioning them strategical-





(Above) The view from the Governor Mine, looking down on the outskirts of Acton, California.



(Above right) A still-life of heavy beams awaits the slow process of decay as the desert asserts her control over the area. Some say there is still plenty of gold here, waiting to be mined.

(Right) A closeup of some of the remaining findings amid the trailings, an accumulation of leftover ore and rock blasted out of the way to get to the gold.



ly when he noticed a stack back in a corner. He pulled the objects out and saw they were old documents, leather-bound books and records. On closer examination, the Milburns realized they had the original mining documents for hundreds of claims filed for gold, water and oil at the turn of the century. Some of the records dated back to 1885.

It turned out that Henry T. Gage, along with other prominent people, had claims all over the area. Included in the documents were ownership interests in mines held by English companies. One of the most interesting things was the large number of claims for water wells. "If they could get water and grow crops to feed all those hungry miners out here," says Milburn, "they figured they had the gold anyway." Estimates of town population at the zenith of gold production ran as high as 10,000, with 5,000 a safer guess.

The Milburns kept two ceramic pieces,

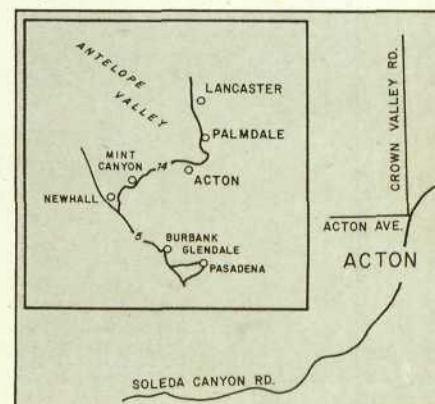
also found in the house. One is a Chinese soy sauce jug, which is one of many made in China and used in the United States by railroad laborers. The other is a "retort cup," which the production staff of the mill in Acton once used to test the gold content of the ore.

According to Milburn, the same gold-production process could be going on today. "There is still plenty of gold down there (in the Governor Mine), and it could be mined right now, if it were not for the Lend-Lease program," Milburn says. "We gave the Russians our pumps and there is no other way to keep out the flooding in the deeper part of that mine."

The most recent chapter in the history of the Governor Mine has ended. Is this the final chapter, the last hurrah for the Governor? Only time will tell.

If you would like to pay the Governor a visit, drive north from Los Angeles on the Golden State Freeway (Interstate 5) to the

Antelope Valley Freeway (Highway 14). Take 14 toward Lancaster and exit at Crown Valley Road. Turn left at the stop sign, go back under the highway and continue straight up the road. Stay on this road, past where the name changes to Governor Mine road (1.2 miles from the highway), until the pavement ends. There, to your left, is the Gov. **D**



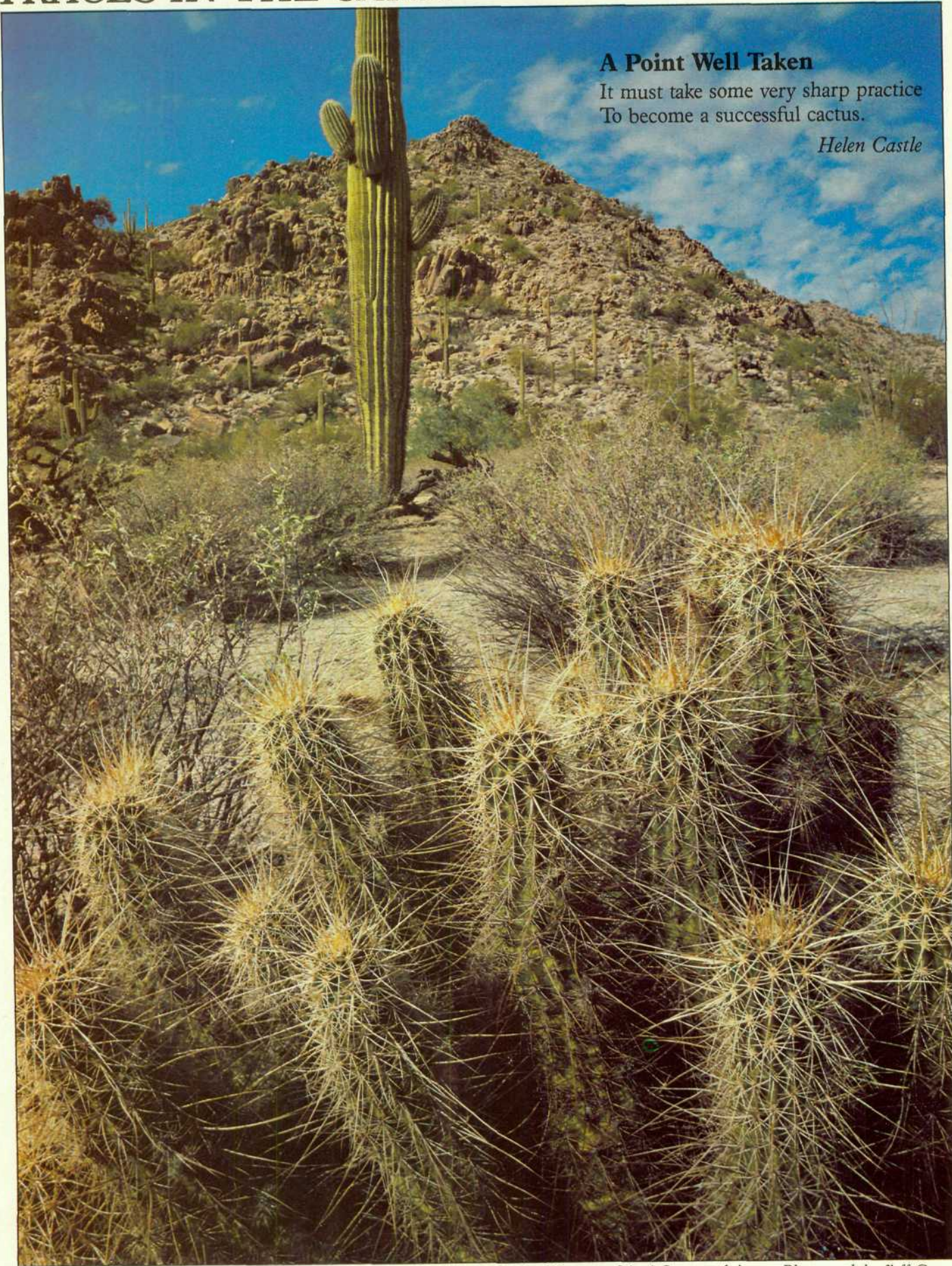


# TRACES IN THE SAND

## A Point Well Taken

It must take some very sharp practice  
To become a successful cactus.

*Helen Castle*



*Hedgehog cactus, south of Sacaton, Pinal County, Arizona. Photograph by Jeff Gnass.*





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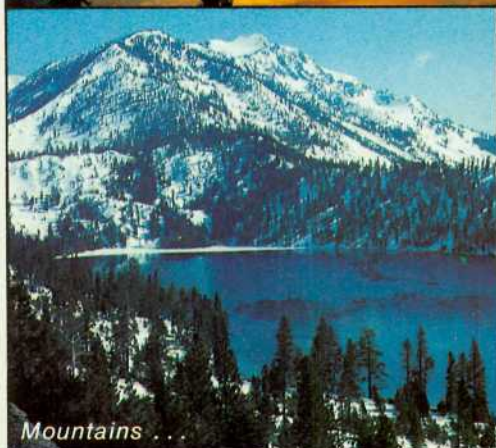
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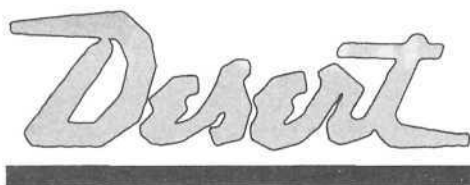
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*The following is taken from Randall Henderson's original editorial plan and mission for Desert magazine, published in October, 1936. The world has changed drastically since then, but the integrity of his vision has not. We will carry on the spirit of service and communication in which he began.*



## The Original Editorial

**T**HE REAL desert . . . is a land whose character is hidden except to those who come with friendliness and understanding.

To those who come to the desert with friendliness, it gives friendship. To those who come with courage, it gives new strength of character. Those seeking relaxation find release from the world of man-made troubles. For those seeking beauty, the desert offers nature's rarest artistry. This is the desert that men and women learn to love.

The editorial staff has two missions: First, to entertain and serve those Americans whom desire or circumstance have brought to this last great frontier of the United States; and second, to carry as accurately as is possible through word and picture, the spirit of the real desert to those countless men and women who have been in-

trigued by the charm of this desert land but who are forced by economic necessity to live elsewhere.

This is to be a friendly, personal magazine, written for the people of the desert and their friends—and, insofar as possible, by desert people.

---

*This is to be a friendly, personal magazine, written for the people of the desert and their friends — and, insofar as possible, by desert people.*

---

The desert has its own traditions: art, literature, industry and commerce. It will be the purpose of *Desert* magazine to crystallize and preserve these phases of desert life as a culture distinctive of arid but virile America. We would give

character and personality to the pursuits of desert peoples, create a keener consciousness of the common heritage which is theirs, bring them a little closer together in a bond of pride in their desert homes, and perhaps break down in some measure the prejudice against the desert which is born of misunderstanding and fear.

It is an idealistic goal, to be sure, but without vision the desert would still be a forbidding wasteland — uninhabited and shunned. The staff of *Desert* magazine is undertaking its task with the same eagerness and unbounded confidence which has brought a million people to a land which was once regarded as unfit for human habitation.

In the accomplishment of our task we invite the cooperation of all friends of the desert everywhere.

*Randall Henderson*



# The Lost Grave of a Neglected Hero

*It is my hope that a Desert reader will relocate the true gravesite of Captain Melchoir Diaz.*

---

by Choral Pepper

---

**E**ACH OF US seeks immortality in our own way—through children, good deeds, accomplishments. When great heroism goes unrecognized, I feel as betrayed as I do over false imprisonment. I yearn to do something about it. That is why, at long last, I am about to reveal the true location of the Diaz grave.

I used the historical facts of this story for a chapter in my book, *Baja California* (now out of print) and also in *Lost Treasures of the West*, but in deference to the gentleman who confided in me, I withheld the location of the grave. I would still hesitate to reveal it, were I not convinced that the present generation of desert wanderer is more concerned about the preservation of the ecological and historical phenomena of our shrinking back country than were those of the past, who often rode roughshod over the vast, empty deserts.

Does the grave contain treasure? I don't know. Melchoir Diaz, the beloved Spanish army captain who met his death by accident, was a nobleman. Traditionally, he would have worn his family coat of arms engraved on a ring, a neck medallion or gold uniform buttons. Typical of a Conquistador, he would have worn a helmet, sword and sheath, perhaps with a golden buckle and insignia. We know that he carried a spear, which was the cause of his death.

Whatever treasure the grave may hold is inconsequential, compared to the

historical interest its true location would invoke. The late Walter Henderson, who discovered the mysterious grave in the Baja California desert, confided the full information surrounding his find only to me. It was his wish that through *Desert* magazine, which I then edited, his suspicion that the grave held the remains of Diaz could be confirmed. Unfortunately, it was one of the few opportunities that I had to leave unexplored when back country vehicles and equipment were available to me.

I share it now, hoping that a *Desert* reader will relocate the site. Perhaps then we can obtain the cooperation of the Mexican government to uncover it.

**M**ELCHOIR DAIZ was dispatched in 1540 by Coronado to rendezvous with Fernando Alarcon, whose fleet was carrying heavy supplies up the Gulf of California for Coronado's expedition to find the fabled Seven Cities of Cibola. As Coronado and his forces moved north, however, their guides led them further and further toward what is now New Mexico and away from the gulf where they were to meet Alarcon. When Coronado arrived in a lush valley near an Indian village far east of the gulf, he paused to send Diaz west with a 40-man patrol, mounted on his best horses, to meet the ships.

Traveling west, Diaz arrived on the bank of the Colorado river, about 100



*Somewhere amid these rugged mountains, in the rock-covered terrain, lies the lost grave of Melchoir Diaz.*

miles north of the gulf. He learned from an Indian who had tugged Alarcon's boats through the tidal bore that Alarcon had been there, but was now down-river and had left a note near a marked tree near where the river emptied into the gulf.

Diaz marched south for three days, until he came to the marked tree. At the foot of it, he dug up an earthenware jug which contained letters, a copy of Alarcon's instructions and a record of the nautical expedition's discoveries up to that point.

Realizing that Alarcon was returning to Mexico, Diaz retraced his steps up the river to what is now Yuma, Arizona, where he forded the river. The trail he took north through Sonora had taken his army far inland. Diaz hoped that by following the west coast of the gulf south, he might be able to sight the ships if Alar-





con still lingered in the area.

Marching southwest, Diaz and his men came to Laguna de los Volcanos, about 30 miles south of Mexicali. From this point, the narrative recounted by historians grows vague, except for a report of Diaz' fatal injury and subsequent burial.

The injury occurred when a dog from an Indian camp chased the sheep that accompanied Diaz' troops. Angered, Diaz threw his lance at the dog from his running horse. Unable to halt the horse, he ran upon the lance, which had upended in the sand. It shafted him through the thigh, rupturing his bladder. Statements vary as to how long he lived following the accident. Coronado's official historian, Castañeda, writing 20 years after the fact from second-hand information, reported that Diaz lived for several days, carried by his men on a litter over rough terrain. A more modern historian, Baltasar de Obregon, wrote that Diaz lived for a month following the accident. Herbert

Bolton, the distinguished California historian, wrote that after crossing the Colorado River at Yuma on rafts, Diaz and his troops made a five or six-day march westward before turning back, following Diaz' injury.

If Bolton's information relative to the days they marched is correct, and if Castañeda is accurate about the number of days Diaz lived after the accident, Diaz is buried on the west coast of the gulf. If he lived for a month, however, the grave very likely lies in Sonora. This has never been established, although historians have searched for his grave on the east coast of the gulf for several centuries.

In 1540, the Baja coast of the Gulf of California lay considerably west of its present location and the mouth of the Colorado was further north. This river was famous for jumping its banks, until Hoover Dam tamed it. During various stages of its history, the site of Yuma alternated between the Arizona and California side of

the state line, marked by the lawless river, so the exact place where Diaz crossed remains in question.

**D**URING THE Depression of the early 1930s, Walter Henderson, then a young man living in Southern California, cranked up a Model A roadster and headed south with a friend toward San Felipe, which is on the east coast of Baja California. At a spot where a window-shaped rock formation (still marked by a sign) known as *La Ventana* stands, they unloaded their camping gear, filled their canteens from a water tank in the rear of the car and set out on foot to search for a rare blue palm oasis once described to them by an old prospector.

As it turned out, they hiked too far south. Baja was only rudely mapped in those days and Mexican woodcutters had not yet been forced that far below the border, so there was no one to give them directions. Throughout the entire Arroyo



# Lost Diaz Grave

Grande and Arroyo Tule watershed, they saw nothing but twisted cacti writhing across the sandy ground, occasional stubby tarote trees and lizards basking in the sun. On both sides of the wide arroyo up which they hiked, jumbled boulders stuck like knobs to the mountainsides. In some areas, the mountains were the deep, dark red of an ancient lava flow; in other sectors they were granite, bleached as white as the sand in the wash.

When night fell, the hikers unrolled their sleeping bags, built an ironwood fire and fell asleep watching the starry spectacle overhead.

At dawn, they brewed coffee and refried their beans from the night before to spread on hunks of sourdough. There was no hurry: They had all day to explore, as long as they kept moving back in the direction of their car.

Late in the afternoon, after hiking across a range of hills, they came upon a curious pile of rocks set back a short distance from the edge of a steep ravine. For miles around there had been no sign of human life, modern or ancient. The pile was nearly as tall as a man and twice as long as it was high. It was oval, resembling a haystack. The stones were rounded, and although the ground in the vicinity was not littered with them, Henderson and his companion figured that they had been gathered at great labor from the general area.

They lifted a rock and turned it over. It was dark on top, light-colored underneath. Desert varnish (the dark coating) forms slowly in arid regions such as Baja, where rainfall is practically nonexistent. The fact that these rocks were all coated on top indicated they had remained in their positions for a very long time.

The rock pile stood close to the edge of a narrow ravine that twisted down from the hills. The site was not visible from the surrounding country, so it was not intended as a landmark. That it was a grave, they felt certain, even though it was an unusually elaborate structure for its isolated situation. Baja California natives have always conscientiously buried corpses found in remote countrysides, but usually the grave is simply outlined with a series of rocks, rather than built up man-high like a monument. Whoever lay beneath this rock pile was obviously revered by his companions, who must have numbered more than a few in order to erect it.

Tilted against one end of the rock pile was an ancient piece of weathered ironwood nearly a yard long and as thick as a man's thigh. If a smaller crosspiece had

been lashed to it to form a cross, the addition had long ago weathered away. Mexican woodcutters have all but depleted the desert of ironwood now, but during the '30s it still was conceivable to Henderson that a heavy log could have been found close enough to drag to the graveside.

By this time, the sun had fallen low in the mountains behind them, so the men left the pile of stones and hurried across the desert to reach their car before nightfall. They never had occasion to return.

A few years later, however, the memory of the mysterious pile of rocks arose to haunt Henderson and continued to do so for the rest of his life.

While reading the English translation of the *Narratives of Castañeda*, Henderson came upon a passage that read: "On a height of land overlooking a narrow valley, under a pile of rocks, Melchoir Diaz lies buried." He would have known immediately that he had found the lost grave of this Spanish hero except for the fact that Pedro de Castañeda, who travelled as a scribe for Coronado, believed that Diaz

## The memory of the mysterious pile of rocks arose to haunt Henderson for the rest of his life.

was buried on the opposite side of the Colorado River. As stated earlier, Castañeda wrote his manuscript 20 years after it had happened, and then on hearsay, as he was with Coronado rather than Diaz. Henderson went to his own grave firmly convinced that the topographical features of the gravesite he had discovered and its mode of construction matched all historic descriptions exactly.

So convinced was he, indeed, that he sought an appointment with the Mexican consul in Los Angeles to report his findings and suggest an investigation. What followed was amusing.

Henderson was received politely enough, but turned away by the deluge of problems his suggestion encountered. He was told that any such search party, to conform to Mexican law of that time, must consist of two to four soldiers, an historian with official status, a guide to show them where they wanted to go, a cook to feed them and mules and saddles so the Mexican officials "would not have to walk or carry packs on their back like common peons." In addition, someone would have

to put the mules to bed and saddle them, so a muleteer would have to accompany them, and a security guard would have to protect Diaz' helmet, sword, armor, coins, jewelry and whatever else of value accompanied the skeleton in the grave.

All this was to be paid for by Henderson, should he wish to sponsor the expedition. A further stipulation stated that if the area turned out to be too rough or too dangerous for the retinue involved, Henderson would be obliged to call off the whole thing and turn back, regardless of the expense already incurred.

With not a single monument to honor Cortez in all of Mexico and the Conquistadors held in poor repute, it was unlikely that the Mexican government was particularly eager to honor a poor, ignored captain, even though he was the first white man to set foot on Northern Baja and California soil.

So Diaz sleeps, a neglected hero, while Mexicans and Americans alike pay homage to lesser discoveries and explorers who opened up the Southwest and lived to enjoy their acclaim.

Today, the expedition could be accomplished with land vehicles instead of mules. Perhaps the grave could be spotted by air. The landmarks, which I never before have revealed, are designated on the hydrographic chart of the Gulf of California, as well as on other maps. A line drawn from Sharp Peak (31°22' N. Lat., elevation 4,690, 115°10' W. Long.) to an unnamed peak of 2,948 feet, N 25° E from Sharp Peak (about 12 miles away) will roughly follow the divide of a range separating the watershed that flows to the sea. Somewhere near the center of that line, plunging down the westerly slope, is a rather deep, rock-strewn arroyo. On the north rim of this arroyo, and set back a short distance, is a small mesa-like protrudance, or knob of land. There may be a number of arroyos running parallel. It is on one of these where the land falls away to the west, that the rock pile overlooks the arroyo. That was as close as Henderson was able to identify it.

Anyone who shares my fascination with history would experience great excitement over the prospect of disproving the prevalent belief that Padre Eusebio Kino was the first white man to come ashore on the west side of the Colorado. Even more rewarding would be to endow a neglected hero with the immortality he deserves. **Z**

*If anyone is seriously considering going on a search for this lost grave, please contact Choral Pepper through Desert magazine, as she is most interested in the outcome of such a journey.*



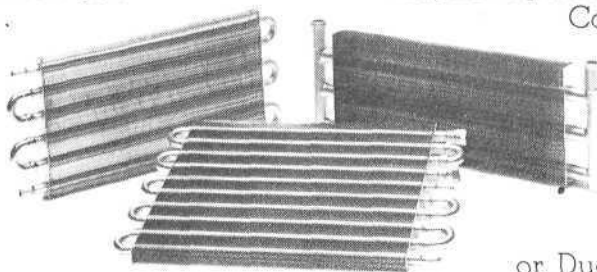
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# CALENDAR

August 1 - August 31

## California

**Through Aug. 2:** A photographic exhibit capturing the delicacy of the tiniest desert wildflowers runs through August 2nd at the Natural History Museum in Balboa Park, San Diego, Calif. The exhibit features photographs by Robert I. Gilbreath, taken in the deserts of the western United States and Mexico. For further information, call (714) 232-3821.

**Aug. 7-9:** The 42nd annual Golden Bear Gem and Mineral Show is being sponsored by the California Federation of Mineralogical Societies at the Anaheim Convention Center, 800 W. Katella Ave., Anaheim, Calif. This event is an all-encompassing, competitive lapidary show. In addition to the competition, there will be demonstrations of different techniques of cutting, polishing and faceting; lectures on gem investments and identification; and retail and wholesale dealers. Admission is \$4 for adults; \$2.50, 12 - 18; under 12, free. Hours on the 7th and 8th are 10 a.m. to 9:30 p.m.; on the 9th, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

**July 14 - Aug. 30:** The 15th Annual Sawdust Festival is being held in Laguna Beach at 935 Laguna Canyon Road. Hours are 10 a.m. to 11 p.m., 7 days a week. This festival is known for the most unique crafts and fine arts exhibit in the world. Admission is \$1 daily or \$5 for a season pass. Children under 12 are free. The festival will feature wandering musicians, demonstrations of artists at work and many varieties of fine foods. Many of the crafts exhibited will be for sale. For further information, contact Ron Ep, Promotion Director, Sawdust Festival, Box 1234, Laguna Beach, CA 92652.

**Aug. 29 - 30:** The San Francisco Gem and Mineral Society will hold its 27th annual show, Golden Gateway to Gems, in the Hall of Flowers, Golden Gate Park, San Francisco, Calif. Hours on Saturday are from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Sunday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Features will include original gemstone carvings; live demonstrations on silversmithing, faceting of gemstones and creative carving; and mineral, lapidary and jewelry exhibits. For

further information, contact Mrs. Carl H. Riesen, Publicity Chairwoman, 295 Stonecrest Dr., San Francisco, CA 94132.

**Annual Contest:** The 7th Annual Poetry Competition sponsored by the World of Poetry, a quarterly newsletter for poets, will be awarding a \$1,000 grand prize. Poems of all styles and on any subject are eligible to compete for this, or 99 other awards. For rules and official entry forms, contact the World of Poetry, 2431 Stockton, Dept. B., Sacramento, CA 95817.

## Illinois

**June 3 - Sept. 8:** The Field Museum of Natural History, Roosevelt Road at Lake Shore Drive, Chicago, IL, is featuring an exhibit on the Hopi Indian. This exhibit celebrates America's oldest continuously surviving culture and features large scale models of Hopi religious ceremonies, hundreds of kachinas and a hall filled with candid photographs by Joseph Mora. Shortly after these photographs were taken, cameras were banned from Hopi public dances. The ban is still in effect. For further information, contact Barbara Lancot at (312) 322-8859.

## New Mexico

**August 6-9:** The 60th Annual Intertribal Indian Ceremonial will be held in Gallup, New Mexico. More than 50 tribes from across the United States and Mexico will gather at this festival. There will be two days of parades, four days of Indian dances, rodeos, arts, crafts and foods at nearby Red Rock State Park. Admission is \$6 for dances, \$4 for rodeos or \$8.25 which includes admission to the exhibit hall, one rodeo and one night performance. For information, contact Intertribal Indian Ceremonial, P.O. Box 1, Churchrock, NM 87311. Phone (505) 863-3896.

**Aug. 7-9:** The 13th Annual Lincoln Days are being held in Lincoln, New Mexico. This is the 100th anniversary of the death of Billy the Kid. Events include evening pageants, a 41-mile Pony Express Main Run from the ghost town of White Oaks, a parade, fiddlers contest, arts & crafts, ghost town tours and food booths.

**Aug. 15-16:** 5th Annual Loop Bicycle Tour. Starting in Silver City, 125 cyclists will pedal 75 miles through Gila National Forest, past ghost towns, Lake Roberts and the Santa Rita open-pit copper mine. Overnight, Camp Thunderbird. Cost is \$20, which includes lodging and meals. Ride starts at 7 a.m. For information, contact The Bicycle Shop at (505) 538-5694.

**Aug. 22-23:** 60th Annual Indian Market is being held in Santa Fe. More than 500 artisans will be featuring jewelry, pottery, sculpture, painting and weaving. A juried competition will be held. Admission for Indian dances in the patio of the nearby Palace of the Governors is \$2. There is no charge for admission to the Market. Hours are from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. For further information, contact the Southwest Association on Indian Affairs at (505) 983-5220.

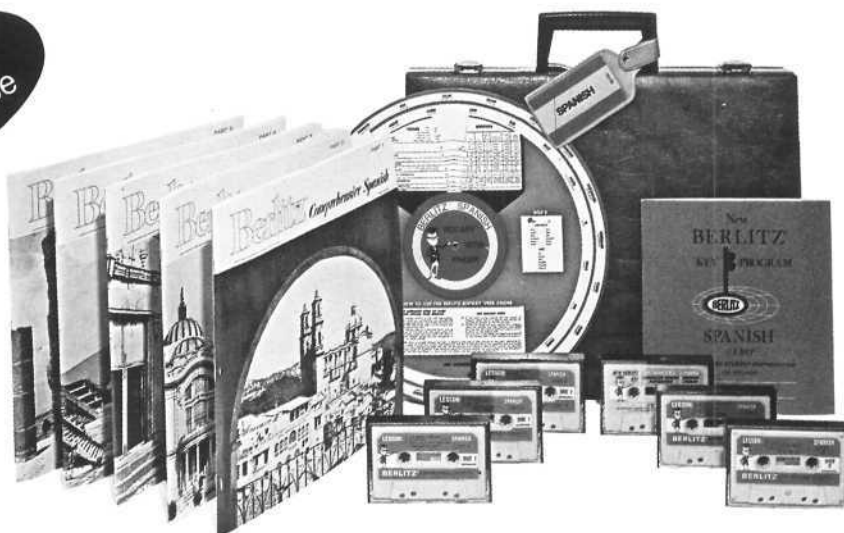
## Utah

**Aug. 1, 3-8:** The Festival of the American West is being held in Logan, Utah. Most of the events will be held at Utah State University's Spectrum, a massive special events center. There will be a historical pageant held each evening beginning at 8. Admission for adults is \$5; under 12, \$3. The Great West Fair will be held on the Spectrum field from 2 - 9 daily. This is a re-creation of pioneer life with continuous entertainment, numerous exhibits and many samples of the way the west was in art, cooking, crafts and day-to-day living. Admission for adults is \$3.50; children 7-11, \$2; under 7, free. It's an experience of our legacy of the past that shouldn't be missed. For further information call (801) 750-1144 or 1145.

*The Desert Calendar is a service for our readers. We want to let them know what is happening on the desert. If you are having an event, or even a year-round activity, that you think they would like to hear about, let us know. There is no charge for items listed in the Calendar. We only ask that you submit it to us at least two months prior to the event. We (and our readers) want to hear from you.*



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# THE DESERT ROCKHOUND

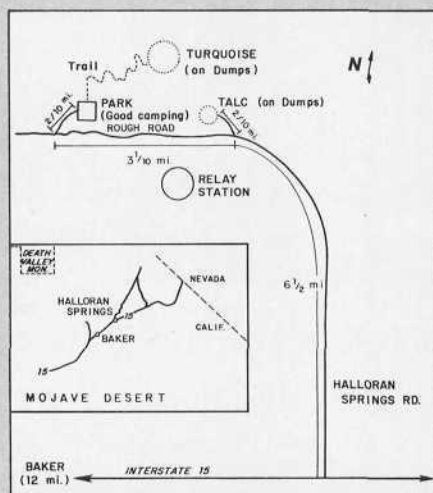
by Rick Mitchell

## Collecting Sites:

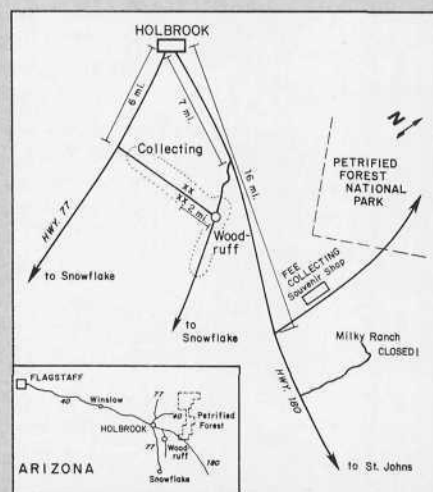
Very nice specimens of talc, some with interesting dendrites, can be found near Baker, California, on an abandoned dump. The color ranges from pink and green to brilliant white. The dendrite-covered material makes interesting display pieces, as do the colored ones, and the larger chunks can be used for carving. To get to the location, go 12 miles east of Baker on Interstate 15 to the Halloran Springs turn off. Head north six and one-half miles and you will notice dumps on the right. There is a dirt road going to them, and it is passable by most vehicles. Be careful of the dangerous vertical shaft and do not venture in. There is plenty of nice material on the surface, so it isn't necessary to risk your life exploring the mine itself.

While in the area, if you would like some nice nuggets of turquoise, I suggest continuing on Halloran Springs Road another three and one-tenth miles. The road is rough, so proceed only if in a rugged vehicle with good clearance. At the given mileage, you will notice a faint set of ruts doubling back to the right. Follow them two-tenths of a mile to the obvious parking area. From here it is necessary to hike the trail, which is easily spotted, up the cliff to the north. Walk about one-half mile to the abandoned dumps, being sure to take some water. The trail is in good shape, but steep in a few places. It ends at the old Toltec Turquoise Mine, and brilliant blue specimens can be found throughout the white, chalky dumps. The pieces are small, most being less than one-quarter of an inch in diameter, but a few are larger and well worth looking for. This material is outstanding in color, and even the tiny chips can be used in countless lapidary applications. Take a shovel, tweezers, trowel and light-colored pan to inspect the dirt as it is shoveled. Extracting the little nuggets is tedious work, but you will be surprised at how much can be obtained in a relatively short amount of time. As was the case at the talc location, keep out of the mine itself. There is no turquoise inside and the tunnels are rotten and extremely dangerous.

There has been a change of status in one of the most famous petrified wood collecting locations in the country. This is Milky Ranch, just south of the Petrified Forest National Park, in



*Talc and turquoise collecting sites, near Baker, California.*



*Petrified wood collecting sites, south of the Petrified Forest National Park, Arizona.*

Arizona. A few weeks ago, I was greeted by a locked gate and sign stating they were no longer in the rock business and collecting was not allowed. I inquired at the souvenir shop, just west of the Park's entrance, and was informed that Milky

Ranch had been closed to rockhounds for many months. I did, however, do some collecting on the souvenir store's property, but the price was quite high, 50¢ a pound, with a 25-pound minimum. If you would like to collect adjacent to the famous Petrified Forest, simply register at the shop and they will give instructions as to how to get onto the property. The material is beautiful Arizona wood, but comparable pieces can be obtained in Holbrook for 15¢ a pound. The only benefit is having the opportunity to dig your own.

If you would like to find some good Arizona petrified wood, but don't want to pay such a high price, I suggest collecting in the vicinity of nearby Woodruff. Beautiful multicolored pieces can be found all along the roads of the area, most, though, being no more than a few inches in diameter. Nice cabochon and tumbling size chunks are easily obtained, and it is well worth the trip. My favorite spot is about two miles west of town, on both sides of the pavement. The material found in this region is reputed to be the most colorful petrified wood in the world, and it is really exciting to find.

## New Equipment:

Lortone, Inc. has a new line of six-inch polishing heads and a storage cabinet for those and other six-inch accessories. The Lorton Polish Heads are slightly convex, having a bonded foam rubber face. Polishing discs and sandpaper can easily be attached with adhesive. These polishing heads cost about 30 percent less than their traditional counterparts, and seem to do as good a job.

The 13-inch-high utility cabinet is designed to hold an assortment of six-inch wheels and discs. The Model UC-6 is all aluminum, with six adjustable shelves and additional space below. If you would like more information on either of these two items, contact Lortone at 2856 N.W. Market Street, Seattle, Washington 98107.

For those who work with faceted stones and have problems holding them in tweezers or traditional three prong

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holders, Raytech Industries is now marketing a four prong stone holder. This new design can securely grip most cuts, helping to eliminate unsightly fingerprints. The holder has an adjustment feature which increases or decreases the jaw tension so that a wide range of stone sizes can be accommodated. For more information, contact Raytech at P.O. Box 6, Stafford Springs, Connecticut 06076.

#### Books:

*Lapidary Carving for Creative Jewelry*, by Henry Hunt, is a fine manual for anyone interested in gemstone carving. There is a discussion of stones and their suitability for carving, as well as detailed accountings of tools and procedures. Numerous photographs illustrate the techniques and finished pieces. The book primarily emphasizes unusual, free-form carving, rather than the more traditional cameos, animals and other frequently encountered items. This is a fresh approach, being a must for anyone interested in such a craft. The cost is \$12.95, and it can be found in bookstores or through the Desert Press, Bouse, Arizona 85325.

#### Museums:

The St. Louis Museum of Science and Natural History has an exhibit of great interest to the rockhound planning a trip to Washington, California, Montana, Oregon, Arizona, Utah, Colorado, Idaho, New Mexico or Wyoming. Collecting spots are pinpointed on maps and there are specimens from each of these locations. A free bibliography is also available, listing additional sources of information. If you have the chance, be sure to visit this interesting and helpful display. A little time in the museum will surely make your trip more productive and interesting.

The Loma Linda University has recently opened a new Mineral Museum on its La Sierra Campus, located at 4700 Pierce Street, in Riverside, California. On display is one of the most amazing collections of spheres that can be found anywhere. There are more than 750, in sizes ranging

from marbles to those more than 18 inches in diameter. Just viewing this remarkable assemblage of gemstone spheres is worth the visit. The museum is open during normal school hours. I highly recommend planning a visit.

#### Instruction:

The Fort Worth Museum of Science and History is offering a wide selection of classes, many of interest to the rockhound. There are two, titled "Rockhound" and "Lapidary," geared for children, and two others, "Jewelry Casting" and "Advanced Lapidary," for adults. Nominal fees. For more information, write the Museum School Registrar, 1501 Montgomery Street, Fort Worth, Texas 76107.

#### Helpful Hints:

A good way to speed up the polishing process for flat stones and slabs is offered by the *Hy Grader*. They suggest, after fine sanding and a thorough wash, placing the stone under a heat lamp for about five minutes. Then polish on a felt wheel, with tin oxide. This procedure saves having to heat it while polishing, making the process quicker and more economical. Be very careful with water and hands, though, near the heat lamp.

I recently read of a very unconventional method for tumbling stones. The procedure calls for no washing between the grits. Simply add the next finer abrasive and let the tumbling continue. Basically, you should start with 80 grit and tumble for at least two weeks. The theory is that, by the end of this period, all the 80 grit will be broken down and the wash is not necessary. Continue, adding the next finer grit and tumbling at least two more weeks. Proceed through 600 and then thoroughly wash all of the stones. After this complete cleansing, proceed with polish as usual. I have never tried this, and cannot, therefore, recommend it, but have heard it mentioned a number of times. It might be worth a try since, if you are like me, the wash steps are tedious and messy operations that would be nice to eliminate.

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THE TACHE-YOKUTS, *Indians of the San Joaquin Valley*, their lives, songs, and stories. 2nd ed. 1979. Printed. PB \$8.50, HB \$12.95 plus tax. Shipping \$1. Cassette tape of 1940 Tache songs, \$5. Marjorie W. Cummins, 2064 Carter Way, Hanford, CA 93230. Quantity discounts available.

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JOIN THE CACTUS of the Month Club. For your first surprise cactus send \$2.95: California Cactus Pad, 88 McKee St., Dept. D, Ventura, CA 93001.

12 DIFFERENT Cacti: Satisfaction promised. \$8 to El Ranchito, 3816 West Sahuaro, Phoenix, AZ 85029.

JOJOBA SEEDS. 25 natural seeds with information sheet and instructions. \$2.50. Consumer Research, P.O. Box 756, Twentynine Palms, CA 92277.

**YOUR AD** could be run on this page at modest cost — only 75¢ per word per issue (1 or 2 issues), 70¢ per word per issue (3-5 issues), and only 65¢ per word for the same ad in 6 consecutive issues. We need copy on the 10th of the second month preceding issue.

TO: **Desert Magazine Trading Post**  
121 West E St., Encinitas, California 92024

Here is my ad.

It is \_\_\_\_\_ words long (10 words/\$7.50 minimum).

I want it to run in the \_\_\_\_\_ issue(s).

Cost: \_\_\_\_\_ words x \_\_\_\_\_ times x \_\_\_\_\_ ¢ = \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
RATE

Enclose check or money order (U.S. funds) with order.

COPY \_\_\_\_\_

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Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_

Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Examples: P.O. Box 1318 counts as three words; telephone numbers as two words. Abbreviations and zip codes are one word.



# OUR DESERT HERITAGE

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Neither draught nor bandido nor federale nor chubasco will keep him from his appointed rounds.

The plane shown above, a Sikorsky amphibian, serviced the La Paz to Mazatlan airmail route in 1937. The wings are raised above the fuselage to avoid catching a wing-tip in the water on take-off or landing. Notice the crude hydrodynamic pontoons.

This photo was taken by Hulbert Burroughs, son of Edgar Rice Burroughs, the creator of Tarzan. *Desert* magazine art director Tom Threinen discovered a packet of Burroughs' photographs in our archives recently. He since made contact with Burroughs and found that this trip, the length of Baja in 1937, was the highlight of his career.

In future issues of *Desert* magazine, we will share with you the story of Burroughs' journey. Of equal interest, we will present Threinen's story of contacting Burroughs (who had long ago given up the photos and negatives as lost) and returning his prized work. With the tremendous changes in the Baja peninsula in the last 44 years, Burroughs story should be fascinating.

Will we find out about the air male in the photo? Who is that nattily dressed man? And what is an amphibious plane doing in the desert?





## **Capture the spirit of Eagle Rare.** **The 101 proof Bourbon aged 10 years.**

Like the majestic bird it was named for,  
Eagle Rare is incomparable.

The very finest Kentucky Bourbon ever  
created.

Our 10 long years of aging and careful  
testing produce a uniquely smooth  
and mellow flavor no one else can equal.

Eagle Rare. We challenge anyone to  
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**One taste and you'll know  
why it's expensive.**



Bald Eagles once soared above America by the tens of thousands. Today, fewer than 1100 breeding pairs survive south of Canada. For a free booklet on how to help save this extraordinary bird, write Eagle Rare, Box 123, New York, N.Y. 10022.



# Where will you be when your radiator hose bursts?

CHECK YOUR BELTS.  
CHECK YOUR HOSES.  
CHECK YOUR COOLING  
SYSTEM TWICE A YEAR.



COOLING SYSTEM PARTS  
TO KEEP YOU OUT  
OF TROUBLE

Photo Chris Regas

When it happens, it happens suddenly. And you're in big trouble. Your engine overheats, and you roll to a stop in a cloud of steam. That's why you should have your service station or garage mechanic check your belts and hoses this week, or check them yourself. A good rule of thumb is to check them at least twice a year. If a belt or hose is wearing out, replace it. It only takes a few minutes. And it could



prevent expensive repairs and hours of grief.

## IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

### CARLSBAD

Elm Auto Parts  
971 Elm Ave.  
434-3181

### EL CAJON

Broadway Auto Parts  
799 El Cajon Blvd.  
444-9446

Broadway Auto Parts  
1034 Broadway  
442-0684

### ESCONDIDO

H.D.S. Parts & Machine  
1960 W. Mission  
745-8484

L & M Tire  
510 N. Broadway  
745-8484

### HOLTVILLE

Auto Service Supply  
277 East 5th  
356-2964

### LEMON GROVE

Mr. Parts  
7702 Broadway  
469-6147

## OCEANSIDE

Airport Auto Supply  
260 Airport Road  
433-2886

Masters Auto Supply  
208 S. Hill St. 722-1964

### SAN CLEMENTE

Scalzo Auto Parts  
522 S.E. Camino Real  
492-1606

### SAN DIEGO

L & M Tire  
16560 Bernardo Ctr. Dr.  
485-7000

### Mr. Parts

9225 Mira Mesa Blvd.  
578-1600

### Rancho Bernardo

Auto Supply  
11631 Iberia Place  
487-0213

### SAN MARCOS

A & J Auto & Speed  
456 W. Mission Blvd.  
744-5074

### SANTEE

Broadway Auto Parts  
9805 Prospect 449-8944

## SPRING VALLEY

Mr. Parts  
2919 Sweetwater  
465-0359

## IMPERIAL COUNTY BRAWLEY

Pete's Speed and  
Equipment  
171 Main St.  
344-2236

## IN ARIZONA

### AVONDALE

Fowler Auto Parts  
730 E. Western  
936-1495

### CHANDLER

Lloyd's Complete  
Auto Supply  
151 S. Arizona Ave.  
963-6627

### ELFRIDA

Valley Farm Parts  
384-2287

## HOLBROOK

Maxwell's Auto Parts  
501 West Hopi  
524-2848

## LAKE HAVASU

Havasut Auto Supply  
1691 Industrial Blvd.  
855-4117

## MESA

Asian-Europa Auto Parts  
500 W. Southern  
PHOENIX

Mac's Auto Parts  
1913 W. Union Hills Dr.  
866-0750

## TUCSON

Peerless Auto Supply #2  
7230 E. 22nd Ave.  
886-5451

Peerless Auto Supply #1  
5527 E. Speedway  
296-5431

## WILCOX

Valley Farm Parts  
642-3373